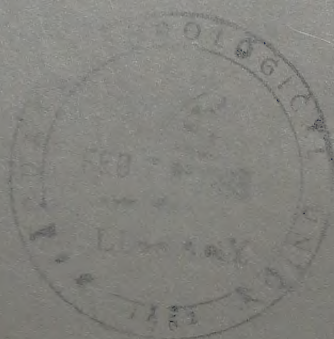


VOLUME THREE • NUMBER FOUR • WINTER 1982

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

**The Jesuit Educational
Center for Human Development**



Cinema Inside the Mind



Mission to the Missionaries



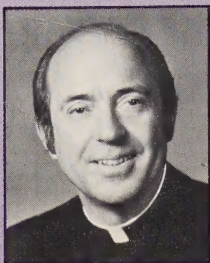
Learning Leadership from Watership Down



Exercise in Understanding



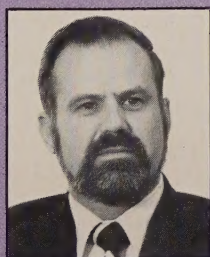
The All-or-Nothing People



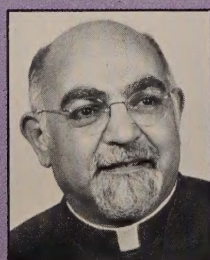
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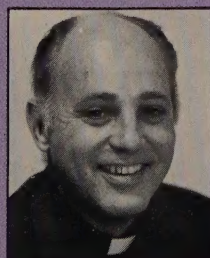
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SENIOR EDITOR Loughlan Sofield, S.T., M.A., is a religious brother whose principal work during the past twelve years has been among ministers. A member of the Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity, he is currently co-director of the Ministries Center for the Laity, Brooklyn, New York. Brother Sofield has conducted workshops throughout the United States as well as in Europe, Australia, Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean.



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ASSOCIATE EDITOR John Carroll Futrell, S.J., S.T.D., is a priest, author, spiritual director, lecturer, and a former director of the Ministry Training Services, Denver. He is visiting professor at the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome. Father Futrell has directed religious renewal programs in the United States, Europe, the Far East, Australia, Africa, India, Sri Lanka, and Latin America. He was formerly codirector of the Institute of Religious Formation at St.

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HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

VOLUME THREE • NUMBER FOUR • WINTER 1982

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The editors are pleased to consider for publication articles relating to the ongoing work of those involved in helping other people through religious leadership and formation, spiritual direction, and counseling.

Manuscripts should be submitted in duplicate to the Senior Editor, Linda Amadeo, P.O. Box 789, Cambridge, MA 02138. Copy should be typewritten double spaced on 8½ × 11 inch white paper with generous margins on each page. Manuscripts are received with the understanding that they have not been previously published and are not currently under consideration elsewhere. Feature articles should be limited to 5,000 words with no more than 10 listings in the bibliography; filler items of between 500 and 1,000 words will be considered. All accepted material is subject to editing.

Authors are responsible for the completeness and accuracy of proper names in both text and bibliography. Acknowledgments must be given when substantial material is quoted from other publications. Provide names of author(s), title of article, title of journal or book, volume number, page(s), month and year, and publisher's permission to use material.

Illustrations, if any, should be submitted as high-quality, glossy, unmounted black-and-white photographic prints. Do not send original artwork.

Letters are welcome and will be published as space permits and at the discretion of the editors. Such communications should not exceed 600 words and are subject to editing.

Book reviews, which should not exceed 600 words in length, should be sent to the Book Review Editor, J. A. Loftus, S.J., 200 Lake Street, Brighton, MA 02135.

All submissions should be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed return envelope.

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EDITORIAL

THE BASEBALL IS IN OUR HANDS

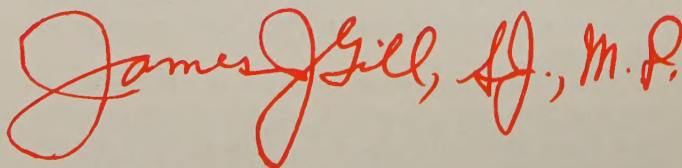
Christmas and the start of a new year make me wish that I could send some kind of gift along with very warm wishes to each of the readers of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. It might surprise you to learn that the green-and-red wrapped present I would want most of all to place in your hands would be a baseball. You would probably be inclined, I suspect, to interpret the ball as a symbol of a wish on my part that *play* would serve as an important source of pleasure and joy in your life all through 1983. That wouldn't be a bad message at all, but it is not quite the one I have in mind.

To appreciate what I would want the baseball to signify, you would have to be aware of the same new theory in the science of physics that has recently captivated my mind. It establishes the beginning of our universe's history at a point in time 20 billion years ago, when what cosmologists term the "big bang" occurred—the event theologians would prefer to call the "first moment of creation." At the "grand unification point" (10^{-35} second later), physicists today are saying, the entire observable universe was only the size of a baseball. From that beginning, when everything that now exists was condensed into what science writer Timothy Ferris describes as "a state of titanic heat and density," to the current fleeting seconds that comprise this very latest day, the primitive elements of all matter have been expanding at a headlong rate, undergoing continuous transformations and condensations into gases, galaxies, solids, liquids—and lastly, mountains, rivers, flowers, birds, and bodies for human persons designed in the image and likeness of the Creator and Lord of all.

What impresses me most, as I contemplate this

powerful and exciting story, is the fact that the forms in which atoms and subatomic particles are today assembled within the mineral, animal, and plant kingdoms that we refer collectively to as "nature" were all *intended* by the divine Artisan as he lovingly tossed into the void that first "baseball" to open all the seasons of our universe's history. Yet the buildings, planes, bridges, poems, and symphonies that also exist today are the work of *our* artistry. We give new shape and meaning to the very same substance that constituted that primordial ball once nestled in the Lord's strong palm.

But of all the deeds made possible by the Father who formed and invited us to share and continue his designer role, surely the most glorious in his sight are the actions of those who devote the years of their lives to helping others to know and love both God and all his creatures and to develop to the full the potentiality he has given them. That is what you our readers do. And that is why I wish I could send you a baseball this Christmas, one with "1983" and " 10^{-35} second" inscribed on it, so you could take it into your hands and look at it for a moment or two each day, and think about the humble-sublime and creative role that you have been cast to play in the 20-billion-year drama that began its climax on a silent night in the little town of Bethlehem.



—James J. Gill, S.J., M.D.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Encouraged to Persevere

I've read a lot of personal growth stuff and psychology over the past fifteen years and you people (by what I've read of your magazine) are putting out a first-rate publication. Keep up the great work!

Rev. James Lawrence
Randolph, Vermont

I would like to thank you once again for HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. I find it very helpful and I know many others who do so too. The variety that has been brought into it in the last year or so has helped a great deal. I hope your energy survives to continue this work.

Joseph Dargan, S.J.
Irish Jesuit Provincial
Dublin, Ireland

Editorial Board Improvement

There is a concern that I have, namely, that your editorial board includes so few women and only one lay woman. It is obvious in my own work that the questions you are raising, although most immediately relating to priests and religious, also affect the lives of lay people and in some special ways are acutely obvious in the lives of lay church employees. For this reason, as you find positions on your editorial board open, I would urge you to include well-qualified lay women as a balance to the other outstanding individuals you have included in this group.

I make this suggestion because of my personal concern that professionally qualified lay persons (and most particularly, lay women) who are in church ministry rarely have input into the pastoral and psychological concerns that your journal addresses.

Clarisse C. Croteau-Chonka
Richmond, Virginia

Editor's reply: We now have three lay women on our editorial board, Mrs. Barbara Benington, Mrs. Pa-

tricia Connell, and Ms. Jan Nugent. All are very active in ministry within the church. Grateful for Ms. Croteau-Chonka's suggestion, we plan to endeavor continually to improve the diversity and quality of our board.

Remember Lay Audience

I am aware of the breadth of perspectives that you are called to attend to in developing a work of such high quality. However, it strikes me that in the majority of your articles the focus, emphasis, and examples are drawn from religious life. In reading your statement of intent, "... interpreting the wealth of information in psychology, medicine, and psychiatry impacting on the work of persons engaged in spiritual guidance and counseling," it seems that this audience is not limited to those professed or ordained. Lay religious professionals, obviously, can transfer concepts and examples to their particular frame of reference; but I wish you, as a magazine dedicated to human development, might more closely reflect the variety of experience and life-style your audience includes. Thank you.

David Ramey
Dayton, Ohio

Paranoid Possibly Deaf

I appreciated your fine article, "Helping the Paranoid Person" (Spring 1982). An additional fact that readers might helpfully keep in mind is that some people who are exhibiting evidence of paranoia (suspiciousness, projection, etc.) are behaving that way because they are experiencing difficulty with hearing. As women and men grow older, they often become increasingly more deaf and consequently more paranoid. Those who are concerned about the well-being of aging religious and lay persons might help them enormously by encouraging them to have their hearing tested by a physician when they begin to show signs of thinking and acting in a paranoid way.

Gemma A. Sullivan, R.N.
Manchester, Connecticut

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MISSION TO THE MISSIONARIES

Interview with Maria Rieckelman, M.M., M.D.

The editors of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT waited nearly two years for an opportunity to find Dr. Rieckelman home for a time in the United States and free for a few hours so that she could be interviewed. This warmhearted, indefatigable woman—a sister, missionary, physician, and psychiatrist—grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio, entered the Maryknoll Missioners at the age of eighteen, earned a bachelor of science degree at Mt. St. Vincent College, in New York City, and a doctor of medicine degree at Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She has become, as this interview reveals, a specialist in cross-cultural psychiatry, using her unique background to assist missionaries to cope with the inevitable stresses in their lives in a manner conducive to their personal growth. The interview took place at the house of studies of the Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity.

HD: Sister Maria, as a Maryknoll sister and psychiatrist, what type of ministry are you engaged in these days?

Rieckelman: Principally, I'm working with our own and other missionaries living in, going to, or coming from cross-cultural mission situations. I'm

able to assist some who are at the point of a career change, some who want to go out and serve in a mission situation, as well as others who want to begin a cross-cultural ministry right here in the United States. Sometimes I work with groups, at other times with individuals. I enjoy both.

HD: Where do you do these various kinds of work?

Rieckelman: Here in the United States as well as in various other parts of the world, particularly where Maryknoll is at work. Where I work depends largely on what requests come in. If, for example, Maryknoll sisters in Bolivia want some help, they write to tell me what their needs are and what they would like me to do. I go there, then, to be with them and assist them on their terms; it's not a venture I initiate.

HD: What sort of problems are your sisters experiencing?

Rieckelman: More and more their needs around the world are arising from the stress that results from increasing poverty, political pressure and upheaval, repression, and violence. We are always dealing, too, with the issues of communication, self-understanding, and ways of coping with tensions existing between the individual missionary and the various groups with whom she is living, working, and interacting. We are facing everywhere the challenge to witness our call to be followers of Jesus in a world of increasing violence and oppression.

HD: Do you visit these religious communities as a therapist or as a teacher? Just how would you describe the capacity in which you work?

Rieckelman: I see myself first as a co-missioner and friend, then as an educator and consultant in the situations I've mentioned. I help people to reflect on what is happening in their lives and work and to make appropriate decisions for action. In general, I see myself doing much more in the realm of preventive psychiatry than actual therapy. What I'm doing is focused on educating people to know themselves better and challenging them to go beyond where they are. But I'd call it therapeutic when my efforts help people to move toward better health, toward a deeper sense of responsibility for their own lives, and toward a greater capacity to respond to one another in a more creative way. Ultimately, my goal is always to help others accept the gifts of their own lives and integrate these with their gift of faith.

HD: You said you help sisters who are living and working among the poor and in difficult political situations to deal with the stress in their lives. What are they experiencing?

Rieckelman: Many of them are finding that the people with whom they share their lives are being deprived of the bare necessities of life. Their people are becoming less and less able to provide food, clothing, shelter, and education for their children. The sisters are seeing people displaced from one part of the country to another because of weakening economies, multinational and governmental pressures, and in some cases virtual civil war. I think the refugee problem is increasing all over the world for many reasons. As a result we are experiencing people who are living with considerably more insecurity. Sometimes because of a particular political stand they have taken or because of particular associations they may have, they are attracting violence toward their whole family. Once someone near and dear has suffered imprisonment, some sort of torture, or even death, they live in fear, wondering who in their family is going to be next.

HD: And as your sisters experience such poverty and distress with the people they serve around the world, what happens to them?

Rieckelman: The emotional toll is tremendous. That's one of the reasons I go to be with them and why they often need help in order to reflect on what their situation is and how they are to relate to their people. All of us sisters carry deep inside us a basic belief system that urges us to deep caring and service of others. However, at times we have an exaggerated sense of responsibility to take care of things for people, to improve life for them. What we need to realize is that we can accompany and can enable people to make their own situation better, but we can't rescue or save them. We can't be their saviors. And even though we have in our minds some idea of a perfect world, we have little power to translate that into reality instantly here and now. Again, our

human reality viewed within a faith context keeps our perspective clear.

HD: You are helping these women, then, to realize that some of the basic beliefs out of which they have been operating are unrealistic. But when they don't change these and they experience inevitable frustration and disappointment, what do you see happening to them?

Rieckelman: First of all, illness. I think for people who grew up in our Western culture that has always been the most usual and acceptable way for stress to express itself.

HD: Any certain forms of illness?

Rieckelman: Just the common types: bronchitis, chronic headaches, gastrointestinal illness, cardiovascular and asthmatic problems, and so forth. And a whole range of emotional illnesses. I think it is very easy for us to become angry and hostile toward whomever we perceive as the enemy doing harm to our people. Stress also shows itself through a tendency to become overwhelmed with a sense of disappointment in ourselves and depression. We eventually discover that what we want, what we hope for, and what we think we would be able to accomplish if we were more perfect people than we are just doesn't happen. Our expectations are at times far in excess of what we can realistically hope to achieve, and we end up with a sense of despondency. What we have to do is get rid of the erroneous basic beliefs that set us up to feel repeatedly disappointed, angry, hostile, and afraid. If we don't correct them, the outcome will eventually be either physical or emotional illness.

HD: How do you go about helping sisters to examine the beliefs that underlie their emotional reactions?

Rieckelman: We usually begin in groups by examining what they are experiencing on their mission, what they are feeling, and how they are thinking about what is happening to them. My own role is to facilitate the conversation; these women usually give a great deal of feedback to one another, when encouraged. I've observed a growing capacity on the part of many to affirm one another, to point out each other's real gifts, and say something like, "Look, you are doing a very worthwhile thing here, and you can continue to do it, so why mess it up and ruin yourself because you think you have to do everything?"

I try to help them recognize what they are feeling and channel their beliefs more realistically. Everywhere I go I find that we have unrealistic expectations of ourselves and one another. We need to keep paring these down so that they match reality and become a part of ourselves that we can live with. On the other hand, I try to help them activate their real power to love, to be agents of growth and change in others.

**We think we know
who we are,
but our values
and beliefs have not
been challenged as
they are in a new
culture**

HD: You are doing this for groups of people already working in mission areas?

Rieckelman: Yes.

HD: Could this group experience be provided before people go out to these parts of the world and begin to experience the stresses you mention? Or must they wait until they are suffering from stress to discover what unrealistic beliefs and expectations they are actually carrying around inside them?

Rieckelman: We're trying now to help our missionaries in both places. We are providing a lot more cross-cultural preparation and orientation before our women and men go to the mission situation. But we need group experiences on the missions, too. Here in the United States we think we know who we are, but our attitudes, values, expectations, and beliefs have not been challenged the way they are when we move into a new culture. All of a sudden we discover that what we thought we knew about ourselves and our personal value system are now in need of reevaluation. I think there will always be a need, once missionaries are living and working among people in a culture different from their own, to reidentify themselves in terms of values, attitudes, and expectations.

HD: Is it more difficult for your sisters to move into some cultures rather than others?

Rieckelman: I believe so. But it is also true that some individuals get along better in some foreign cultures than in others. Studies have shown that "cultural distance" always puts people under stress

to adapt, and the more different from my own culture a new culture is, the more stress I am likely to experience in trying to adapt myself to it. The stress might not be painful—it could be felt as a challenge—but often it is painful. At times a person who moves into a new culture is practically reduced to the status of a helpless infant, when the language, type of work, customs, food, climate, values, and so forth are very different from those experienced at home. A person who is not very spontaneous and needs structured situations in which to feel in control will find some new cultural situations extremely stressful and debilitating until an adaptation is achieved. Some people simply have to withdraw one way or another—either by returning home or maintaining a certain amount of cultural distance from the local people. It's practically never possible to identify oneself with them completely. But when this is achieved, it takes a long, long time.

HD: In what parts of the world have you been working?

Rieckelman: I've been working here in our own United States, of course, and in Bolivia, Chile, Peru, Argentina, all of the countries in Central America and Mexico, Kenya and Tanzania, in Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and the Philippines.

HD: Do you work alone or as part of a team?

Rieckelman: I do both, depending on what the circumstances are. Here in the United States I more often work as a member of a team, with at least one other person—a sister, lay person, priest, or brother. But when I work in the mission areas, I more frequently work alone. My firm belief, however, is that it is much more useful to work as a team, and as a man-woman team preferably, since this is the basic relational reality. It's a very good way to model what's happening in our culture and the church today. Men and women are called to be friends, work with each other, sometimes live together in the community, and engage in missionary ventures together.

HD: You're saying that you believe it's helpful to your sisters, who are working with men around them, to see you working in collaboration with a man?

Rieckelman: That's right. But I'm not always working with just a group of sisters. It is often a mixed group of lay persons, priests, brothers, and sisters. I often go to some part of the world principally to work with a group of women but also schedule workshops for men and women together.

HD: How long have you been working with priests and religious?

Rieckelman: Since 1970.

HD: Did it require some sort of special preparation to get yourself ready for this transcultural psychiatric ministry?

Rieckelman: Well, for seventeen years I had been a Maryknoll sister-doctor working as a general practitioner in Korea and Hong Kong. During that time I came to realize that there was a great need among missionaries for a better understanding of mental illness. So I sought the opportunity to learn the theory and practice of psychiatry and looked for a good cross-cultural program. There were programs at Harvard, U.C.L.A., and the University of British Columbia that emphasized cross-cultural aspects of psychiatry, but they didn't appeal to me because they were located outside a mixed-culture setting. The psychiatry department at the University of Hawaii, in Honolulu, offered exactly what I was looking for, and I was trained there in both adult and child psychiatry for the next four and a half years.

HD: That program gave you a chance to become familiar with a variety of cultures?

Rieckelman: It certainly did. There are people in Hawaii who have come not only from the Central Pacific but also from Japan, Korea, China, the Philippines, and even Norway and Sweden, along with many from South and Central America.

HD: Did you find that when Koreans or Japanese become emotionally ill their symptoms differ from those manifested by a Chinese or an American psychiatric patient?

Rieckelman: Yes, I did. The way in which mental illness manifests itself is frequently different from one culture to another. In one culture the way to deal with stress is predominantly through physical illness; in another culture a kind of hysterical behavior is very common. Among some people, for example, there is a very high incidence of paranoia; other cultures reveal more schizophrenia or psychophysiological types of disorder.

HD: What about Americans in the United States?

Rieckelman: We really represent many different cultures. I think psychosomatic and addictive problems are very prominent in our culture. Still, whatever the culture and the outstanding symptoms, the basic underlying dynamics are the same everywhere.

HD: When you completed your training in Hawaii, where did you go?

Rieckelman: I had been expecting to go back to the Orient to work, perhaps in Korea, Hong Kong, or one of our Asian missions. But at that time, in the mid-seventies, people in religious communities of men and women were becoming much more aware of the amount of stress in their lives and of the need for integration of their psychological and spiritual needs. I was asked to teach in a graduate program

in pastoral counseling at Loyola College, in Baltimore. There I had a chance to work with ministers of all faiths. In addition I began to serve as a consultant to a number of congregations of sisters and priests concerning issues of changing identity, ministry, celibacy, sexuality, and community. At about that same time, Maryknoll and other missionary communities began to consult with me about cross-cultural issues and problems and the increasing stress arising in our ministry situations.

HD: And by doing that you became a pioneer in a new type of ministry within the church?

Rieckelman: I guess you could say that. It certainly hadn't been done before, at least not very widely. It interested me to read in a psychiatric journal recently that the State Department has now begun to employ psychiatrists to work with its American personnel around the world because of the cross-cultural stress and adjustment problems they face. The hostage situation in Iran and various other catastrophic situations made this need apparent. But it's exactly what we've been trying to provide for our missionaries in cross-cultural situations for years. We've also been working for a long time to help them with the challenges of adult-life development. These, too, have just recently become subjects of greater attention to many psychiatrists in this country.

HD: At the present time, you said, you are working with both women and men who go to mission regions and into cultures different from their own. Who holds up better in such potentially stressful situations, the women or the men?

Rieckelman: I think that, in general, women get along better. If you asked me why, I'd say that I believe they are better able to be in touch with their feelings. The affective aspect of a woman's personality is much more within her awareness than feelings usually are among men. Women in our country have permission to be affective in a way men don't or at least haven't in the past. When women are dealing with stress, are feeling impoverished in their life situation, or are experiencing difficulty in their relationships, they are often much better able to get in direct touch with their emotions than men are. And because they are aware of their pain they can begin to deal with it.

HD: Would you say that women, more than men, have an ability to do something about the stress they are experiencing?

Rieckelman: A difference I've seen between men and women is that women become aware of their problems more easily, but men seem freer to make a move to do something about theirs, once they become aware. However, in our culture men tend to live under such pressures as "I've got to be perfect; I've got to take care; I've got to be in control; I can't be weak; I can't be tender; I can't withdraw

from this situation." Such beliefs can put a man under tremendous pressure.

HD: But you said a little earlier that the invitations you have been receiving to conduct workshops or programs in many parts of the world come more frequently from women.

Rieckelman: That's right, from women who are experiencing their needs.

HD: Does this say that men are less able to recognize their need for the kind of help you provide, or do they recognize it and are reluctant to ask for help?

Rieckelman: I think both occur, but things are changing. I see men around the world becoming increasingly conscious of their own needs, whereas in the past I found them saying that women need the kind of help I provide but denying their own need.

There are still many men who are reluctant to say "I need help." That reflects the way men have been programmed. They are supposed to be strong. But when they finally accept their own needs as human persons, I think they will be a lot better off, will solve more of their problems, experience less stress, and find more enjoyment in life and ministry.

HD: When you are working with people in a mission area, is the outcome any different when you have a mixed group rather than just women or men?

Rieckelman: It is. In mixed groups men and women don't talk about one another: they talk to and listen to one another. Women get to hear the felt experiences of men, and men become familiar with the felt experiences of women. Men learn what beliefs women have about them, and women discover what men believe about them. Many powerful insights are developed, especially in relation to how culture-bound we are and how prone to stereotype one another.

HD: Do you find that a lot of the stress that missionaries experience is related to their sexuality?

Rieckelman: Yes, I do. Many religious people have trouble accepting their own sexual feelings and urges; they struggle and experience too much conflict in regard to close relationships and friendship. But friendship and relationships are more important than ever, now that we are moving into a new understanding of mission and evangelization as being relational—not what we do for people as much as how well we enable people to find God within each other and to respond to this God in hope.

We can hardly be in ministry to another in a way in which we haven't come to be in relationship to ourselves. The whole dimension of sexuality—as it relates to self-acceptance, friendships with others, and ministerial relationships—is very underdeveloped in most of us. I'm talking about our capacity

Many missionaries need help to live their lives and perform their ministry with enthusiasm, hopefulness, and enjoyment

to relate with intimacy, depth, and openness, not just to persons of the opposite sex but of our own sex as well.

HD: What can you do for such people during a workshop that's just a few days long?

Rieckelman: I don't set any unrealistic goals for myself or the participants. We just accomplish whatever we can during the three, five, or seven days available. I don't believe that in any one workshop we will ever "get it all together" in regard to our sexuality, for instance. It is throughout our lifetime that we need to strive for greater sexual integration; a workshop is only one point along that continuum. It's one occasion to come to a better understanding of ourselves and others and to move a little further toward our own liberation, freedom, and hopefulness.

HD: Do you go back to the same places and work with the same groups from time to time?

Rieckelman: At times I have returned a second and even a third time. When that happens, I think it's helpful. But even when I don't have the opportunity to follow up myself, the missionaries are generally able to continue what we've been working on by using their own resources.

HD: It must be true that wherever in the world missionaries are living and working there is a need for the kind of service you are providing as a cross-cultural educator and therapist. But certainly by yourself you can't cover the entire world. Are there

enough other specialists, at this stage in the history of religious congregations, to provide all the help that is needed along this line?

Rieckelman: No, I don't believe there are. In our own community there is a priest doing the same type of ministry that I do, and whenever possible I welcome the chance to work in collaboration with him. I know a few Jesuits and some other religious men and women who are doing similar things. There is, however, an enormous need for education and growth facilitation around both cross-cultural issues and the tasks of psychosocial development throughout adulthood. Many missionaries need help to live their lives and perform their ministry with more enthusiasm, hopefulness, and enjoyment and to minimize the stress, oppression, and constriction that plague their existence. Indeed, we do need many more well-trained specialists who have dealt with these issues in their own lives and who are capable and willing to reach out to their sisters and brothers on mission.

HD: Are you yourself training any other sisters, psychologists, or psychiatrists to work among missionaries, to help them in different cultural settings to cope with stressful situations and continue growing?

Rieckelman: Through the Loyola College program in pastoral counseling I've had a chance to help train people who are now working among different cultural groups here in the United States as well as around the world. We have trained some ministers of various faiths who are now working in such places as Hong Kong, East Africa, and South America. But I don't think it's realistic to expect that we will be able to help all those in need by training professional counselors, psychologists, or psychiatrists to assist them. What I firmly believe is that a relatively small number of us can help great numbers of religious people to learn to help themselves. That's why every time I work with a group either here in the United States or abroad, I try to educate the participants to help themselves, to teach them the skills they can use in their community situation, and to help them see the ways in which they can use their abilities to do with others exactly the same kinds of things I am trying to do with them.

HD: How do you prepare people to keep making progress after you have conducted a workshop or program for them?

Rieckelman: I try to help them learn from their own life experiences, to draw profit from their own failures as well as successes, to recognize in their own interpersonal relationships what coping skills are useful, and to see how those skills can be used effectively within their own community or ministry team. In other words, I try to help people become more reflective and responsible about their own behavior and feelings and what these tell them

about themselves. My aim is to help them discover what the elements are that enable them to develop as persons, to reach out to others with love, and to accept their own life and death with equanimity and hopefulness. My underlying belief is that these same skills that we use for our personal development can be communicated to others for them to use for their own growth and ministerial effectiveness.

HD: Do you recommend books they should use as a follow-up?

Rieckelman: Very often I suggest that people read *HUMAN DEVELOPMENT* to continue the movement of our workshops. I also tell them about Jean Miller's *Toward a New Psychology of Women* and Daniel Levinson's *Seasons of a Man's Life*, as well as Roger Gould's *Transformations, Male and Female*, edited by Ruth Barnhouse and Urban Holmes, and James Nelson's *Embodiment*. Another excellent book is Penelope Washburn's *Becoming Woman*, as is William Bridges' *Transitions*. So is, by the way, Madonna Kolbenschlag's *Kiss Sleeping Beauty Good-Bye* and finally *Christian Life Patterns*, by Evelyn and James Whitehead.

HD: Are religious men and women who go to the missions generally avid readers?

Rieckelman: I find that some of them are incessant readers. Reading is one of the great resources we have available in many parts of the world where there is no other form of entertainment. Missioners often turn to books and magazines for their entertainment, education, and inspiration.

HD: With all the traveling you do and all the adaptation demanded of you in relation to food, climate, and culture, there must be a considerable amount of stress you experience in your own life.

Rieckelman: Actually, I wouldn't describe myself as someone who lives with a conscious awareness of much stress in my own life. I think I am aware, though, when I am under stress. I believe that my own life experience—especially with illness, interpersonal conflicts, and other struggles—has helped me develop a capacity to be reflective and return to my faith through prayer when I'm feeling stressed. I think that because I have had good friendships all through my life and have been reflective, I've been able to handle sickness, my limitations, and emotional traumas in a way that minimized the stress.

HD: You are learning from your own life experiences how to diminish stress, and you're also teaching missionaries how to do the same.

Rieckelman: That's what I'm endeavoring to do. I don't believe that studying a textbook will ever take the place of learning and gaining insights from one's own experiences; they are the best teacher of all. One of the most important things I've learned is

It's possible to reduce unnecessary stress, and some stress is valuable; if there is no stress at all, we are dead

the fact that the situations in my life that have been the most painful have also produced the most growth. Out of illness has come a whole new understanding of my own gifts, my limits, and of the way I can live more creatively with people.

HD: Would you generalize that observation and say

that in all human life growth occurs principally in conditions of suffering or distress?

Rieckelman: No, I wouldn't make that universal a statement. I don't believe suffering always leads to life; it can sometimes lead to misery and even death. A lot has to do with what people understand and learn from suffering and the way they deal with it. Distress can result in hurt, resentment, or personality constriction; it can also, as exemplified in Christ's passion-death-resurrection experience, be a source of increased life.

HD: So, suffering can contribute to growth, but does growth require suffering?

Rieckelman: I prefer to say that there is no growth without struggle, rather than suffering. I think that life for all of us is largely a struggle, yet I am much more conscious of the good things in my life than I am of the struggle it has brought. People don't live in constant elation and joy for long periods of time. To understand life as one huge happy package of bliss and goodies is terribly unrealistic—just as unrealistic as viewing all of life as suffering.

HD: When you are helping people, then, to learn how to cope with stress in their lives, you aren't promising to teach them ways to eliminate it completely.

Rieckelman: Absolutely not! I'm telling them that it's possible to reduce unnecessary stress and that some stress is valuable. If there is enough stress in our lives we can grow; if there is no stress at all, we are dead.

THE ALL OR NOTHING PEOPLE:

Why Compulsive Workers Need to Avoid Intimacy

JAMES J. GILL, S.J., M.D.

A recent letter from a young religious sister included a request that HUMAN DEVELOPMENT help her to “get a better understanding” of one of the somewhat older members of her community. She described the woman as “consistently devoting all of her time and energy to her work, never seeming to develop or value any warm relationships with people, and always insistent that others conform themselves to her way of doing things.” The letter ended with the question, “Can you tell me what, if anything, could be done to help this one-dimensional sister to take some interest in the members of the community around her and become a more sociable and playful person?”

The woman described sounds like one that a psychologist or psychiatrist would call technically a *compulsive personality*. In popular jargon she would be labeled a *workaholic*. Many like her have found their way into both female and male religious congregations and into the ranks of the clergy. This type of person is recognized with equal frequency among lay people. There is hardly a school, hospital, airline, store, or other workplace that does not serve as home for some such work-preoccupied compulsives.

Despite the fact that psychiatrists and clinical psychologists have a scientific name for them, these

task-oriented people generally do not deserve to be classified as sick. They often accomplish an enormous amount of productive work during their lifetimes. Certain types of occupations appear especially to attract these disciplined, meticulous, and rigid individuals—for example, accounting, book-keeping, engineering, and scientific research. A problem often results when they eventually choose to enter a religious congregation or opt for marriage and family. It arises from the fact that the other people in these settings will naturally feel entitled to a reasonable amount of attention and affection from them. Frustration and resentment on the part of at least some of those living alongside them is almost inevitably going to ensue. Moreover, whether their work brings them into regular contact with colleagues, patients, pupils, parishioners, or customers, it soon becomes apparent that they are more interested in getting their work done than they are in developing a deep human relationship with their co-workers or those they serve.

WORK COMPULSION DEFINED

Compulsivity in relation to a person's work life (as described in the letter quoted) is one of a number of possible personality traits people can

Compulsive people also appear excessively conscientious, overly scrupulous, and often judgmental of themselves and others

develop. Such traits are defined in the third edition of the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-III)* as "enduring patterns of perceiving, relating to, and thinking about the environment and oneself, and are exhibited in a wide range of important social and personal contexts." But when the compulsive workers' relationships with members of their religious community (or, in the case of married persons, with their spouse and children) remain chronically weak, superficial, or ineffectual—even though the worker is unaware and unconcerned—their work pattern deserves to be called a *compulsive personality disorder* according to the American Psychiatric Association's definition. Mental health professionals see a significant difference between this type of disorder and an *obsessive compulsive neurosis*. The former may or may not represent a healthy condition, but a neurosis is always considered to be emotionally unhealthy. Psychopathology is generally judged to be present when behavior patterns are "inflexible and maladaptive and cause either significant impairment in social or occupational functioning or subjective distress."

Compulsive personality disorder is at the root of the behavior of many and perhaps most workaholics. As described in *DSM-III*, persons with a compulsive personality generally demonstrate several but not usually all of the following characteristics: (1) a restricted ability to express warm and tender feelings, (2) perfectionism, (3) insistence that others submit to their way of doing things, (4) excessive devotion to work and productivity, (5) indecisiveness, (6) preoccupation with efficiency,

procedures, details, rules, or form, (7) constant awareness of their relative status in dominance-submission relationships, (8) resistance to the authority of others, (9) lack of awareness of resentment or hurt that their behavior evokes in others.

DSM-III condenses the observations of countless psychiatrists when it states in regard to the compulsive personality: "Work and productivity are prized to the exclusion of pleasure and the value of interpersonal relationships. When pleasure is considered, it is something to be planned and worked for. However, the individual usually keeps postponing the pleasurable activity, such as a vacation, so that it may never occur." Persons with this type of personality will often, like Hamlet, procrastinate when the time comes for decision making. The tendency toward avoidance, postponement, or prolongation they display on such occasions frequently represents an inordinate fear on their part of making a mistake.

ADDITIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Compulsive people also appear excessively conscientious, sometimes overly scrupulous, and often judgmental of themselves and others. When they find that they are unable to control a situation, their environment, or the behavior of other people, they frequently become angry but do not express their emotion directly. For example, a priest may become angry because of the type of music the church organist is playing. Instead of confronting the person face to face, he may ruminate for days about whether he will withhold the pay raise the musician has been expecting. Many of the characteristics of compulsive personality disorder are seen in the Type A individual who is prone to the development of coronary artery disease and the possibility of heart attack. (This syndrome was discussed in the article "Type A Behavior in Christian Life," in *HUMAN DEVELOPMENT*, Fall 1981). Another feature often noted in a compulsive person is an extreme sensitivity to criticism, particularly if it comes from someone in a position of status or authority.

According to Jesuit psychoanalyst William W. Meissner, in *Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry*, (3rd ed.), compulsive persons tend to use unconscious mechanisms to control their emotional conflicts. He observes that they typically attempt to overcome their sadistic inclination to inflict pain or humiliation on others by kindness and politeness and to conceal pleasure in dirt by rigorous cleanliness. They may ritualize their behavior to a significant degree, with the result that to others they sometimes appear to be creatures of habit. Their approach to life is principally cognitive (rational, logical), accompanied by "a lack of adequate affective response and a restriction in the number of available modes of feeling."

In the same volume psychologist David Elkind

explains that the basic dynamic in the compulsive personality is "anxiety about loss of control of instinctual impulses." He explains: "All the compulsive person's behaviors are designed to eliminate the unexpected, the unforeseen, and, hence, the uncontrolled. Given a situation in which, for one reason or another, the planning did not succeed, the compulsive character panics and may retreat to a childlike state of helplessness and dependency." Elkind states that even minor breaks in the routine of compulsive persons can be enough to upset them significantly. Furthermore, "the impulses that the compulsive character is desperately trying to control are powerful, sadistic and angry impulses, and he fears the punishment and guilt their expression would entail."

NEUROSIS IS DIFFERENT

The personality disorder we have been considering must be distinguished from *obsessive compulsive neurosis*, generally a more painful type of problem characterized by recurrent obsessions or compulsions. Obsessions are recurrent, persistent thoughts, images, or impulses that are not experienced as voluntarily produced, but rather as entities that invade consciousness and are considered senseless or repugnant. The most common neurotic obsessions are repetitive thoughts of violence (e.g., killing one's child), contamination (e.g., becoming infected by shaking hands), and doubt (e.g., repeatedly wondering whether one has performed or failed to perform some action, such as having left either a door unlocked or a gas jet on the stove in the *on* position).

The compulsions found in this type of neurosis are repetitive and seemingly purposeful behaviors that are performed according to certain rules or in a stereotyped manner. The behavior is not intended for its own sake but is designed to produce or prevent some future event or situation. As described in *DSM-III*, the compulsive activity "is not connected in a realistic way with what it is designed to produce or prevent, or may be clearly excessive. The act is performed with a sense of subjective compulsion coupled with a desire to resist the compulsion (at least initially)." The person usually recognizes the senselessness of the behavior and derives no pleasure from carrying out the activity, although it does provide a release from tension. The most common of these compulsions involve repetitive handwashing, counting, touching, and checking.

WORKAHOLICS NOT NEUROTICS

Most people who are compulsive in the way they approach their work life reveal none of the obsessional or compulsive features just mentioned. Moreover, almost all of those who deserve to be diagnosed as manifesting signs of compulsive personality disorder, as described earlier, have never

been and will never become victims of obsessive compulsive neurosis. At times persons who gamble, eat, drink, or masturbate excessively are referred to as compulsive. But these are not true neurotic compulsions if the person derives pleasure from the particular activity and wishes to resist it only because of its secondary deleterious consequences.

In her popular book *Workaholics*, psychologist Marilyn Machlowitz observes that people who are addicted to work are "willing to settle for excellence in one endeavor and to admit that they are inept and uninterested in everything else." She defines workaholics as "those whose desire to work long and hard is intrinsic and whose work habits almost always exceed the prescriptions of the job they do and the expectations of the people with whom or for whom they work." But psychiatrist Jay Rohrlich, in *Work and Love: The Crucial Balance*, points out that many who are compulsively dedicating the major part of their lifetime to work are not so much devoted to this activity as they are addicted to it. Such people, who "seem never to stop working even when they are away from the job," have led Rohrlich to the conclusion that, for them, "working is not merely a state of employment, but a state of mind." He has found, among his friends, colleagues, and patients, that "there are some people who are working even when they are playing. They are working when they are making love, or when they are on vacation. They need to be in control of themselves and their environments at all times. They seem unable to live for the moment. . . . Mastery, accomplishment and satisfaction, through the achievement of goals, are what their lives are about."

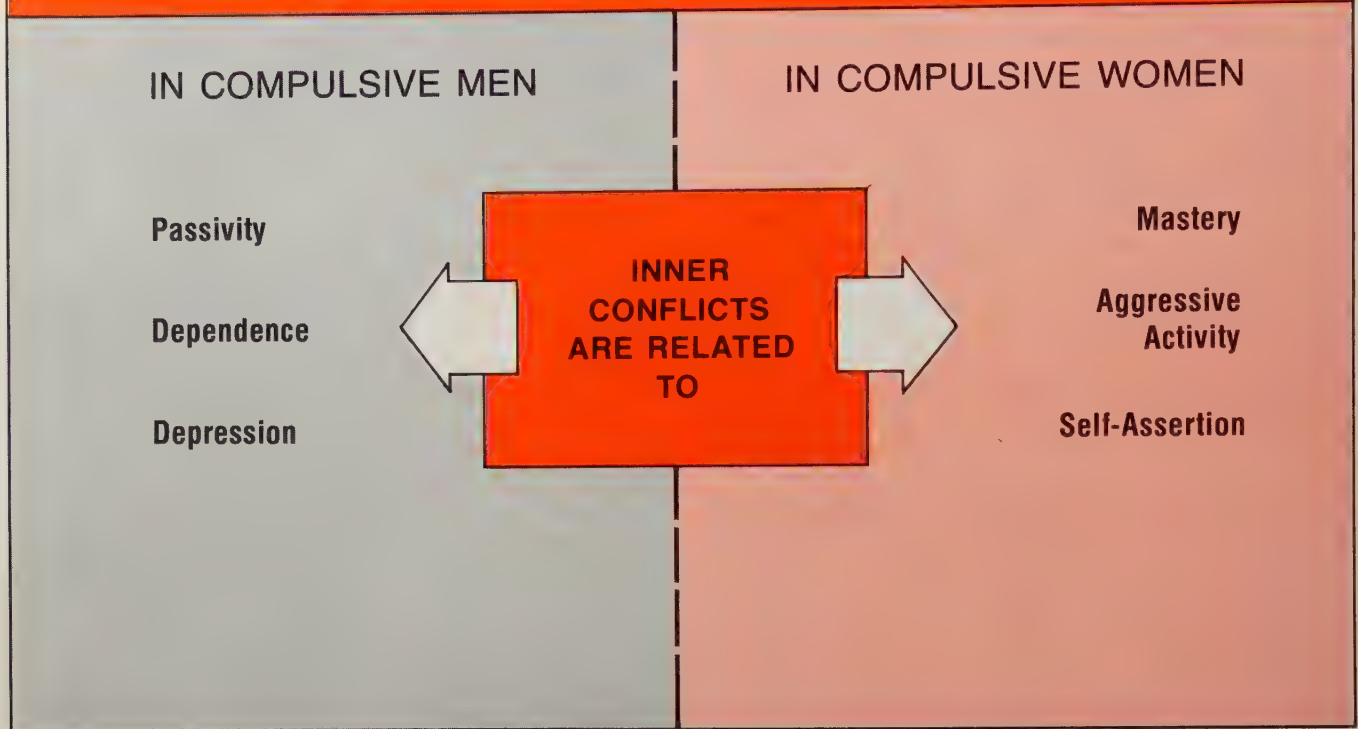
Pioneering Freudian psychoanalyst Karl Abraham viewed work as serving a defensive function. He maintained that forbidden sexual drives and fantasies can be warded off—by some people—"only through intense work," which prevents "the outbreak of serious neurotic phenomena." Abraham explains: "These people make violent efforts to find escape from the demands of their libido (sexual energy) by overstraining themselves in their vocational activities, in their studies, or in the discharge of their duties. They get into the habit of doing an amount of work far beyond normal requirements. Work becomes indispensable to them, just as morphine does to the morphinomaniac, and the urgency of this need steadily increases."

BENEFITS OF WORK

Rohrlich grants that Abraham's attributing "work compulsion only to the need to protect oneself from forbidden sex and desires . . . may be appropriate for some people." But he insists that people become compulsive about their work because it can offer them many other benefits as well.

- A secure sense of being loved can be drawn from the love and respect that work elicits from others.

BASIC CONFLICTS MEISSNER OBSERVES



- The products of work define and affirm a feeling of self in concrete ways.
- People can discharge and channel anger and aggression from other conflicts when they "attack" or "wrestle with" work projects.
- An exciting sense of triumph over an adversary follows successful completion of a challenging task.
- We can punish ourselves and reduce guilt feelings by driving our minds and bodies with a punishing work load.
- Normal fraternal drives can be gratified by the camaraderie enjoyed in the workplace among same-sex colleagues.
- Work is a means of dealing with feelings about death and the passage of time, since our works have a permanence that defies loss and change.
- Work provides organization, routine, and structure for our lives.
- It offers an appropriate outlet for competitive strivings.
- Work helps us to stay sane.

Rohrlich, by way of clarification, states further that "a person who loves his or her work passionately, who experiences the gratifications of achievement with profound satisfaction, and who works hard and long at what he or she identifies as goals is not necessarily a work addict. Only if such a person cannot do *without* the excitement of work when such excitement is not appropriate or consciously desirable can we call him or her an addict." His words suggest, again, that in the case of persons who have pledged themselves to religious

community life or to married and family life, a perennially excessive immersion in work would seem inappropriate, as well as symptomatic of compulsive personality disorder.

ORIGIN IS DEBATED

How do people develop the compulsive personality that inclines them to overwork at the expense of closer personal relationships? Freud believed that ultimately parents are at fault. In his opinion, when they attempt to toilet train an infant too early and too intensely, the child's consequent hostility and rebellion produce feelings of anxiety about how the displeased parents will respond. Freud thought that children begin to employ compulsive behavior to allay this anxiety and then go on through life manifesting the same pattern. By their compulsive personality or neurosis they manage to hold in check their unacceptable hostile or sexual impulses.

Meissner offers a revised explanation of the origin of compulsive behavior. He sees the formation of a compulsive personality beginning to take shape before and during the child's oedipal phase of development, but somewhat differently in boys as compared with girls. Before the oedipal period the boy's wishes, in relation to his parents and par-

ticularly his mother, have been passive and receptive. In other words, he has wanted and needed to be given nourishment both physically and emotionally. Gradually, however, he begins to take on (by using the defense mechanisms of *identification* and *reaction formation*) the active and striving characteristics of the father he is observing and trying to please, and at the same time he represses his infantile passivity and dependence. A girl too, starting at the same time in life, may begin to defend herself against her underlying feelings of passivity, dependence, and vulnerability by developing an intense ambition for active achievement and mastery. In doing so she is, in part, undergoing an identification with her father as well as displaying a wish to gain his approval. But in some instances, Meissner observes, girls go through this experience in an attempt to become the boy that they believe their father really wanted.

ESSENTIAL RELATIONSHIPS

For the normal development of all boys and girls it is essential that the child (1) establish a good one-to-one relationship with both parents before the oedipal conflict begins; (2) go through the oedipal phase of triangular relationships (i.e., child emotionally competing against the parent of the same sex for prominence in relation to the loved opposite-sex parent); and (3) emerge from it with a newly acquired tolerance for ambivalence, that is, a capacity to have simultaneous feelings of love and hate toward the same person.

If some event, such as a parent's death, a divorce, or birth of a younger sibling, prevents a girl or boy from establishing a satisfactory one-to-one relationship with both parents, when the time comes to pass through the oedipal phase the normal and extremely important capacity to tolerate ambivalent feelings will not be developed. As a result, children thus deprived will tend to grow up experiencing inner psychological conflicts in relation to the opposed inclinations they feel—as all human beings do—toward love and hate, activity and passivity, omnipotence and helplessness. To cope with these conflicts they become all-or-nothing persons, regarding themselves exclusively active and omnipotent, not at all passive or in any way helpless. They are able to maintain this illusion by pre-occupying themselves with an endless series of tasks they feel sure they can accomplish successfully—again, an all-or-nothing attitude. This habit enables them to eschew intimate relationships with their parents, then with other people, that would inevitably at times involve love simultaneously mixed with hate or hostility. Through their compulsive pursuit of activity they are able to avoid continuously the ambivalent state of mind, which, because of missed opportunity during the oedipal phase, they never learned to tolerate.

Later in life, Meissner explains, “the basic con-

Compulsive behavior reflects primarily an effort to gain and maintain total control over oneself

licts for [compulsive] men tend to cluster around problems related to recognizing, tolerating and integrating passivity, dependence and depression. Much of the male insistence on striving and activity serves a defensive function in avoiding and countering the underlying difficult and conflict-laden feelings.” On the contrary, the basic conflicts for women “tend to cluster around problems related to mastery, activity and self-assertion. The feminine recourse to a more passive, dependent, depressed—and often masochistic—position serves as a defense against and avoidance of more conflicted areas of aggressive activity.”

AVOIDING HELPLESSNESS

Another view regarding the origin of compulsive behavior is presented by Georgetown University psychiatrist Leon Salzman. He contends that from childhood on compulsive behavior reflects primarily an effort to gain and maintain total control over oneself and one's environment in an attempt to avoid distressful feelings of helplessness.

In *The Obsessional Personality*, Salzman describes the compulsive person as one who fears losing control by being incompetent, insufficiently informed, or incapable of reducing the risks of living. He states: “The overriding purpose of the [compulsive] behavior is to attempt to achieve some security and certainty for the person who feels threatened and insecure in an uncertain world.” In order to maintain a sense of control, albeit a false and illusory one, compulsive people are striving to become both omniscient and omnipo-

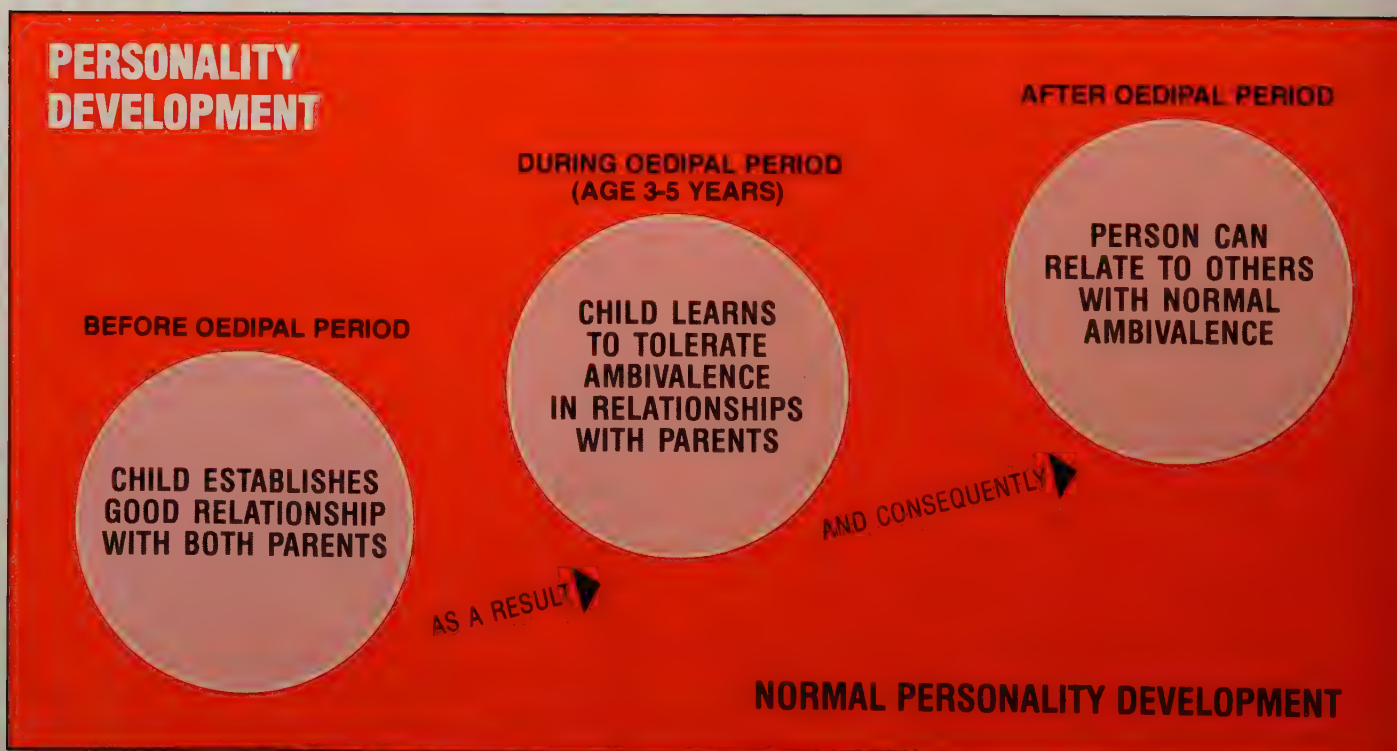
tent. They expect that such abilities will provide them with the power to eliminate uncertainty by guaranteeing their future. Omniscience, they believe, will let them know all the possibilities that may occur; a lack of knowledge might permit something untoward to happen without their comprehending and controlling it. Omnipotence, they feel, will make them capable of exercising whatever competence might be required to maintain control in all circumstances. As Salzman sees it, this compulsive dynamism is a "device for preventing any feeling or thought that might produce loss of pride or status, or a feeling of weakness or deficiency—whether such feelings are hostile, sexual, or otherwise." He sees the compulsive behavior as "an adaptive technique to protect the person from the exposure of any thought or feeling that will endanger his physical or psychological existence."

Obviously, compulsive persons cannot in fact know everything or be competent in all ways, so they generally attempt to master thoroughly some relatively limited sphere of knowledge and skill. They use practically all of their energy and invest virtually all of their time seeking the relevant information and mastering the techniques required to accomplish whatever they feel they can do best. Thus, as in the case of the woman mentioned in the letter that began this article, their work can become their life. And lacking the affective capacity to maintain intimate relationships with other persons (because of their need to keep total control over all of their feelings and avoid recognition and

expression of their own ambivalences and those of others), they neglect fellow members of their religious community or their spouse and children. Here again, they prove to be all-or-nothing people, totally devoted to pursuing achievements, even though these entail turning their back on the communal style of life they at one time chose to embrace.

EFFECTING A CHANGE

Returning to the question HUMAN DEVELOPMENT was asked, "What could be done to help this one-dimensional sister to take some interest in the members of the community around her and become a more sociable and playful individual?", my reply would be: usually not much. In view of the fact that her behavior is enabling this woman to cope fairly adequately with her deep and constant inner conflicts, no significant modification is likely to be accomplished, at least as long as she is satisfied with her way of life, feels successful, and is experiencing no significant emotional pain. Moreover, this sister's apparent addiction to work may be serving one or several other important personal needs. Describing people who cannot interrupt their preoccupation with work even when other matters require their involvement, Rohrlich explains: "Some relish the aggressiveness of work while others depend on the order it provides, into which they can passively fit. Some are obsessed with the initiation phase of work, but never follow



Generally, no one gives up a habit of excessive work—or any other need-satisfying behavior—with ease

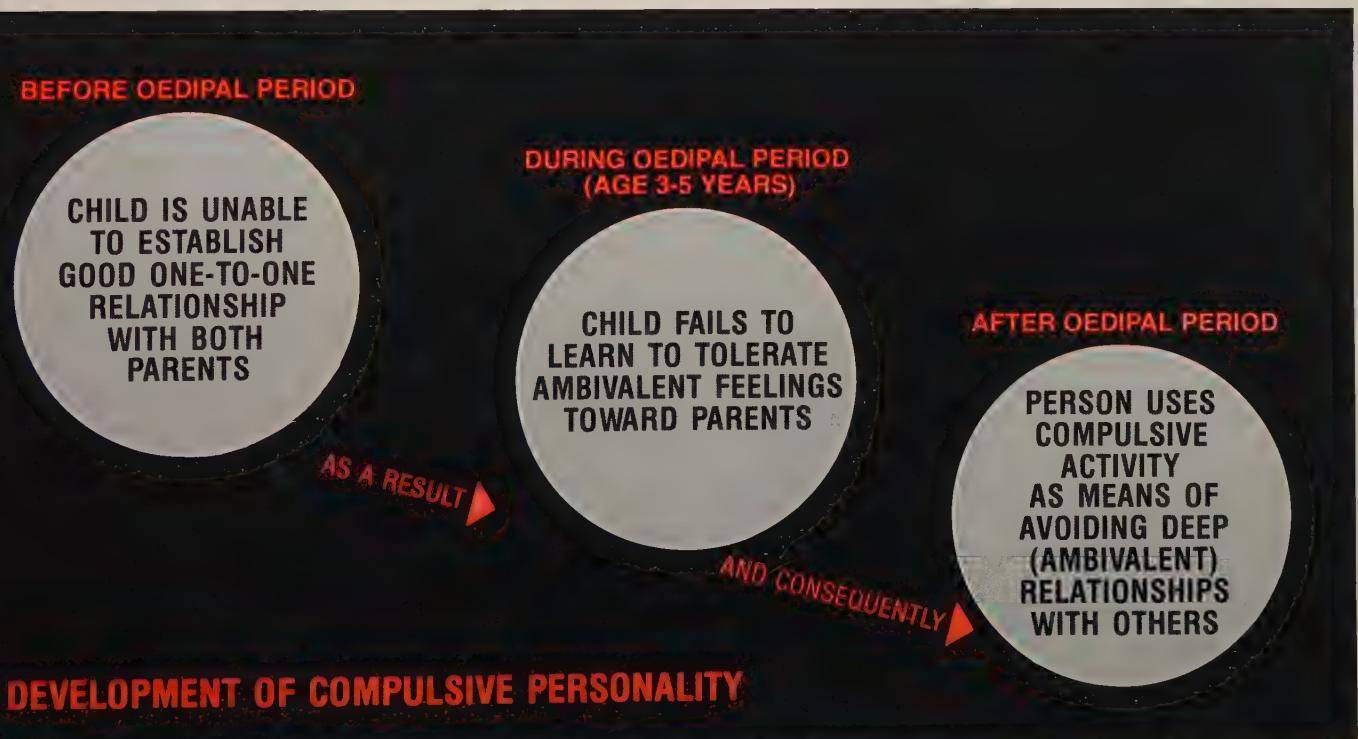
through to the achievement phase. Still others draw sustenance from the narcotizing effects of concentration, but rely on people in authority to define and initiate tasks for them. And there are those with strong competitive needs for whom work means victory, and the satisfaction of being 'better' than other people." As a general rule, no one gives up a habit of excessive work—or any

other form of need-satisfying behavior—with ease.

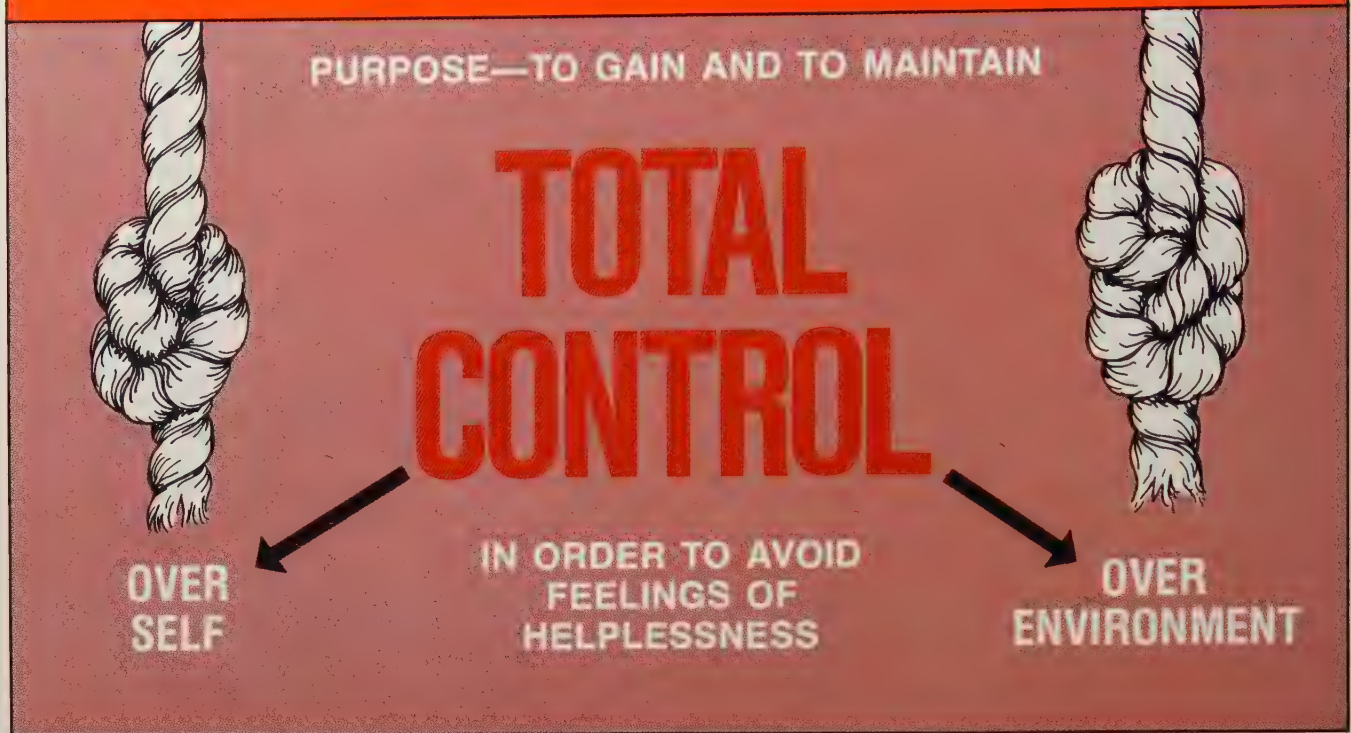
A change in this work addict's behavior pattern might be accomplished if her community members were to inform her about their dissatisfaction, anger, and other complaints. If they were to let her know that they want and feel entitled to more participation on her part in their spiritual, social, and other communal activities, she would probably begin to experience a mixture of anxious and angry feelings. Being addressed this way, she would be likely to perceive their insistence as both threatening and frustrating, and strong resistance to change would almost certainly be evident. However, if she remains for some time deeply troubled because she is in conflict as a result of wanting both to work in her usual, excessive way and also to please and be accepted by members of her community, there is a possibility of her making enough of a compromise to satisfy at least their minimal demands.

PROBLEMS OCCASION HELP

Leaving a workaholic person unchallenged for a long period will sometimes indirectly contribute to effecting a desirable change. Many such persons eventually become engaged in problem-generating abuse of alcohol, drugs, or sex, since these are the only means by which they can readily find momentary relief from their relentless inner drive toward accomplishment. When a person's problem with one of these issues is discovered, it is then possible



SALZMAN'S VIEW OF COMPULSIVE BEHAVIOR



to examine and correct the compulsive behavior and the harmful breakaway activity at the same time. Similarly, a work addict is likely to slip into a painful season of emotional depression when prolonged illness, closing down the workplace, or retirement prevents the individual from continuing his or her usual life-style. It is depression that most frequently brings the compulsive person into the care of a professional therapist. Again, the compulsive behavior and the related emotional problems are treated simultaneously.

Vocation problems too arise in the lives of many task-oriented clergy and religious. During the past two decades I have had the opportunity to provide psychiatric consultation for nearly 200 religious sisters, brothers, and priests who at the beginning of their careers felt very well rewarded by the results of their efforts. Their hard work on behalf of a steadily increasing number of well-served people brought them, in the early years of their ministry, a welcome and encouraging shower of congratulations, gratitude, and praise. Their self-esteem was being sustained quite adequately, thanks to people's response to their all-out performance.

But after a number of years of striving to meet the needs, expectations, and demands of others, these work-focused persons gradually came to feel

that they were being taken for granted; the ego-sustaining applause had disappointingly stopped. They were working as hard as ever, but less happily than before; they became increasingly aware of their own anger. It was resulting from their frustrated need for special recognition and approval. The exhausting work they were doing was being praised at this point in their career only by themselves. Gradually, without realizing what was happening to them or why it was happening, they became depressed.

Next came the inevitable. Unknowingly, they began to send out signals that they needed someone to make them feel valued—someone who would cherish them not so much for their work efforts as for the goodness and loveliness in themselves. As soon as some caring person came along and provided the yearned-for evidence of esteem and affection, these depressed individuals quickly began to feel happier and revitalized. The new relationship provided a sense of personal fulfillment that had been lacking in their lives, and most of them developed in time the belief that they needed to terminate their vocation and enter marriage with that person in order to hold on to their newfound happiness. Without being consciously aware of it, they were generally making their choice, in part, as a

way to avoid backsliding into a state of unrecognized depression.

Unfortunately, most of these men and women had already decided to withdraw from active priesthood or their religious congregation before talking with any professional counselor. Many left, their superiors have complained, without ever exploring and discussing with them their deep and true motives. But most regrettable of all, in many cases, was the ultimate outcome. Once married and launched into a new occupational career, the old compulsive, work-oriented pattern of behavior reasserted itself. And just as their community members had done, many of their spouses have begun to complain that work seems far more important to them than any intimate interpersonal relationship.

RESOURCES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Because *compulsive personality disorder* is both complex and difficult to cure or correct, spiritual directors and religious superiors will generally not be able alone to help those in their care to modify their addiction to work and improve their community participation and relationships. Referral for some professional psychological or psychiatric counseling (when the person is ready and desires it) will usually prove helpful. Behavioral therapy (behavior modification techniques) will sometimes provide successful treatment, but often psychotherapy will be required to uncover and correct the causes. Psychoanalysis is the treatment of choice in the more severe, painful, and life-impairing cases.

I would like to offer a few recommendations on the basis of the issues we have been considering here and of my work with religious and clergy around the world.

1. If you do not want completely task-oriented, intimacy (i.e., friendship and love)-avoiding people in your congregation or ordained ranks, then before you admit them to novitiate or seminary have your candidate-screening psychologist look closely at the balance of work and relationships the candidate has manifested during earlier years. It is not enough to inquire whether the young woman or man has had "friends" that can be named or counted. The more important question to ask is: "When you were busy studying or working during a prolonged season, how much time did you spend with your friends and in what way did you share life with them?" You can recognize all-or-nothing people prior to acceptance (and before marriage as well) whenever the person's life-style reveals that time spent with others occurs only when for some reason work or study is necessarily interrupted; and even then the interactions are usually intellectualized, superficial, and activity-oriented rather than affective, deep, and genuinely personal.

**Most of those
who focus on
people-avoiding
activity will eventually
leave the religious life**

2. Watch during the early years of formation, before any taking of vows or ordination is permitted, to see whether the candidate consistently finds ways to escape spending recreation hours with others and takes on time-occupying tasks that are productive but isolating. In many a novitiate or seminary class, most of those who spend practically every recreation period gardening, designing crucifixes, making ceramics, or engaging in some other people-avoiding activity will eventually leave religious life or priesthood. Why? Because a chronic lack of close friendship (or intimacy)—a basic psychosocial need in human existence—will eventually leave the person feeling an intolerable emptiness for which the religious congregation's way of life or the church's requirement of celibacy for the clergy will often be unfairly blamed.

3. Find out during novitiate years whether the candidate for vows truly wants, intends, and is able to live a religious life in which work (including study) is brought into harmony with participation in the community's social, spiritual, and other activities. Early spiritual formation should bring to light the self-deception entailed in anyone's belief that God measures the worth of persons and will bless and eternally reward them simply in proportion to how long and how hard they engage in *work* for others.

4. Superiors, spiritual counselors, and those who direct ministries are in a position to observe the tendency of work-oriented persons in their care to take on more and more tasks and separate themselves more and more completely from the other members of their community. Such behavior deserves to be confronted at an early stage, and its

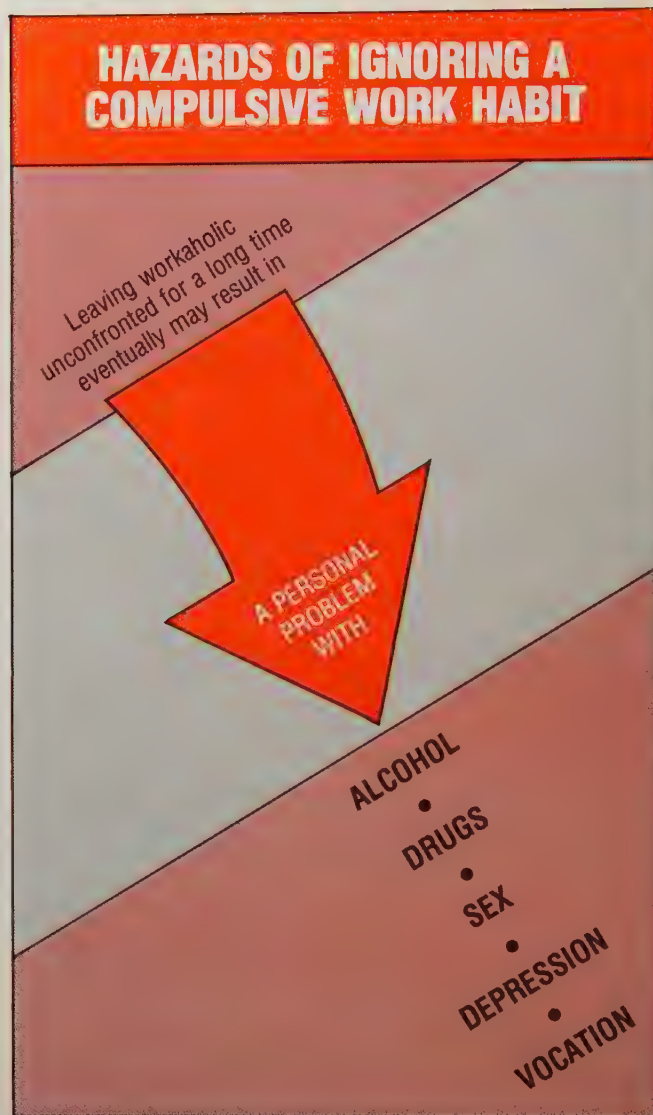
Are we appearing to praise just the hard workers rather than those who know how to blend work with sharing of life?

meaning in the person's life should be deeply but gently explored before it becomes extreme.

5. When you are publicizing your congregation, seeking candidates for your novitiate, or writing documents to inspire and guide the lives of your members, it will always be important to keep asking yourself the question, "Are we appearing to endorse and praise just the hard workers rather than those who know how to blend work with a sharing of life through close relationships?"

6. While recognizing the fact that compulsive workers in ministry accomplish numerous valuable tasks for the glory of God and the good of humanity, it is important to point out to those being formed for service to humanity that work addicts rarely, if ever, attract any vocations to their religious congregations or into the priesthood. They are exemplifying a psychologically and socially disordered life. For the same reason that affection-deprived children of work-obsessed parents do not find the prospect of marriage, parenthood, and family life appealing, those who note a lack of balance in a particular workaholic minister's life (unless they are work addicts themselves) are hardly likely to adopt the profession and life-style of the compulsive sister, brother, or priest they are closely observing.

Religious people, like all human beings, compulsive or otherwise, will always be inclined to seek personal fulfillment through work. Jobs well done attract, at least occasionally, words of admiration, gratitude, and esteem. We all need such positive response to our lives. If we do not find those around us appreciating us for being the kind of person that we are, we will be tempted to use excessive



work as the sister described in the letter is doing: as a way to prove to ourselves that we do have value. The corollary is obvious: Until religious communities learn to show convincingly that they cherish every single one of their members for *who they are*, there will continue to be compulsive persons among them: loners striving in an all-or-nothing way for achievements, missing friendship and love because of the ceaseless and defensive work they are driven from within to perform.

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AN EXERCISE IN UNDERSTANDING:

A Way of Improving Communication Between Aging Parents and Their Adult Children

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The proportion of elderly persons in the total population of the United States is increasing, and the elderly are living longer. This demographic change is affecting individuals, family systems, intergenerational relationships, and older people themselves. A critical issue for intergenerational relationships is how to improve communication between parents and their adult children who are religious. This article is intended to assist religious with aging parents, but it might also be helpful to religious superiors as a resource for counseling community members of any age who are working through family relationships.

Communication is ongoing; it is never too early or too late to learn to communicate better and to build a base for positive interaction. At the end of this article, "An Exercise in Understanding" is included for use not as a response to an immediate family crisis but as a tool to prevent problems and to increase communication.

Major superiors in many congregations know of religious who need help identifying their responsibilities to their parents, to other family members, to their congregations, and to their apostolic work in the church. Some religious separate themselves from their congregations on a temporary basis, often to spend years caring for aging parents. Such actions are sometimes based on assumptions rather

than facts regarding parents' expectations and needs. The religious may undergo needless sacrifice if the decision to separate from the congregation has not been planned in conjunction with other family and community members. At times separation from the community is necessary and appropriate as a response to a crisis; but in some cases the separation may continue when the need no longer exists. Since the lifestyles of individuals and communities change, the religious person's return to the congregation is a difficult adjustment for all. Both the religious and the community may have become very different since the time when the religious took a leave of absence.

Improved communication between religious and their aging parents can reduce or prevent unnecessary separation from the community. Improved communication may also aid in planning for aging parents' needs. "An Exercise in Understanding"

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was designed to stimulate thought and discussion that will help older people and their adult children achieve mutual understanding in planning together for the future.

The Exercise is based on current professional literature on aging and family relationships. Of the many important factors that affect the needs of the elderly, the Exercise focuses on those relating most directly to communication and intergenerational understanding. Key issues addressed in the Exercise include dependence and independence, clarification of values, emotional responses, and choice of a caregiver. Such topics as mental impairment, sensory loss, and chronic disease are not included. Though important, these topics may be initially too threatening and too complex for improving communication with aging parents. The issues addressed in the Exercise will be discussed in the context of society at large, then related to the religious and the complexity of their relationships and responsibilities.

DEPENDENCE AND INDEPENDENCE

Dependence and independence issues can result in stressed family relations. Ordinarily, aging parents want to be independent and to control their lives, maintaining their dignity and equality even when physical limitations make some dependence unavoidable. With diminished physical independence, however, control in decision making becomes more important to the older person. Independence involves the ability to contribute in some way to one's family and society. This ability is crucial to the person's self-esteem; parents who have nothing to give in a relationship usually experience lowered morale.

Some middle-aged adults understand that their aging parents are no longer able to provide parental support and may even need comfort and assistance from their adult children. This realization has been referred to as "filial crisis." Dependence of the parent on the child is called "role reversal," though this concept may be oversimplified. A change in relationship is complicated, usually involving a shift in dependence needs rather than an exchange of roles. An aging parent, for example, may need help from the child in grocery shopping, but may want to maintain control over the selection and purchase of the items. Some elderly persons may refuse assistance when adult children offer it. There is often disagreement over the amount of assistance needed because parents and children may have different perceptions of the older person's capabilities.

In general, factors of independence and dependence affect relationships between religious and their parents in the same way that they affect interactions with other family members. Possible exceptions are filial crisis and role reversal. Because of the difference in lifestyle, the role rever-

sal may not be as obvious among religious; and because of the support religious receive from their community, the need for parental support may not be as great. Role reversal experience may occur, however, if a religious leaves the community to provide care for an aging parent.

CLARIFICATION OF VALUES

Communication between parents and adult children is not something to be learned entirely from books or articles. Although many problems and values are common among them, the elderly are individuals with various opinions, preferences, needs, and feelings, also having differing values, life-styles, and lifetime experiences. In each relationship, parents and children must work to achieve an understanding that will benefit everyone. A prime consideration must always be respect for the integrity and self-direction of the parents. This is particularly important when older persons are too ill to act on their own behalf, so that an adult child must act as an agent for the parent. Under these circumstances, it is important for the child to be familiar with the parents' desires regarding finances, use of public services, privacy, nursing home placement, use of extraordinary life-sustaining measures, and funeral plans.

The religious person's approach to clarifying values parallels that of lay people, but it is also somewhat different. They may differ from their parents and siblings on certain aspects of religious observances and ethical considerations because of their greater familiarity with current church teachings. These differences may complicate communication and make mutual understanding difficult unless expectations are clarified.

EMOTIONAL RESPONSES

Various stressors are associated with the aging of parents, including financial stress; competing responsibilities for family, work, and caregiving; unresolved parent-child conflicts; changes in family roles; and uncertainty regarding the future. Even for persons who ordinarily have effective coping skills, the intensity of family relationships can lead to emotional responses of guilt, depression, loneliness, avoidance, withdrawal, loss of identity, uncertainty of role, anger, and loss of power or control.

According to many studies, guilt is the most common emotional response for the adult child with aging parents. Often the adult child feels responsible for the general well-being of the parents, yet is unable to improve the parents' general satisfaction with life. Guilt can also arise from unresolved conflicts: conflicts that are not resolved early tend to reappear and intensify, causing further guilt.

Loneliness is frequently mentioned by the elderly

A prime consideration must always be respect for the integrity and self-direction of the parents

as a major problem, but loneliness is subjective. A daughter may feel that she visits frequently, while her mother feels neglected and lonely. Simply opening this topic for discussion may help to resolve the problem.

Uncertainty is a universal cause of emotional stress. In discussing and planning for old age, it is important to identify and address factors over which some certainty and control can be attained. For example, it is not possible to plan the time of death, but it is possible to plan various circumstances surrounding it, such as the use of heroic lifesaving measures. Stress can be considerably reduced if aging parents and their children make definite plans for such events.

The stressors mentioned above and the emotional responses to them are no less frequent in the lives of religious than in the lives of other family members; but because the lifestyle of the religious is different, parents' expectations of their religious adult child may differ from their expectations of their other children. The religious who leaves the community to care for an aging parent may experience stress due to the following:

- uncertainty about the length of the separation;
- uncertainty about the new caregiver role and its responsibilities;
- guilt about the apostolic work that was left behind and uncertainty about the eventual reentry into apostolic work and community life;
- loneliness and isolation resulting from separation and the demands of the caregiving role.

"An Exercise in Understanding" tries to address some of these important issues. Those who use the Exercise will be able to clarify some of their expectations; this may help them to plan for aging parents and to avoid unnecessary emotional trauma.

CHOOSING A CAREGIVER

Caregivers of elderly parents are chosen in several ways, and the basis for the choice is not always completely rational. Various types of caregivers are mentioned in professional literature, but for purposes of discussion in this article, they are labeled as follows: the Self-Proclaimed Caregiver, the Chosen One, and the Caregiver of Convenience.

The Self-Proclaimed Caregiver typically takes control and responsibility with or without communication with other family members. This person may or may not be appropriate for the role. Many times the decision is based on a long and complicated history of family dynamics. Frequently the Self-Proclaimed Caregiver experiences problems with other family members because he or she does not allow them to take meaningful roles.

The Chosen Caregiver is selected by the parent for any number of reasons and may not be the best choice. The caregiver may not like or want the role, while other family members may feel rejected because of the choice.

The Caregiver of Convenience either lives close to the parent or appears to have responsibilities that can be changed to incorporate the caregiving role. This type of caregiver's role often evolves slowly, without cooperative planning or decision. The Caregiver of Convenience may feel abandoned by the family and burdened by the increasing demands of the caregiving role.

Religious could fall into any of the three categories described above and find themselves inappropriately placed in the caregiving position. Ideally, the choice of a caregiver should be a family decision made with full participation of family members and with consideration of available services, facilities, and resources. Investigation of community resources and discussion of ways to provide care should not be put off until a crisis arises. In a crisis, the frustration of not knowing where to turn for help and the urgency of the parents' needs can lead to poor decisions. The Exercise was designed to clarify what parents and children expect of the caregiver; the results may suggest community resource options that should be explored.

USE OF EXERCISE DESCRIBED

In 1979, "An Exercise in Understanding" was developed at the Ebenezer Center for Aging in Minneapolis to be used with groups of seniors. Part One is a set of true/false statements for aging parents entitled "How Well Do Your Adult Children Know You?" Part Two is a similar set of statements re-

Part One

How Well Do Your Adult Children Know You?

Directions: The following statements relate to your opinions, feelings, and preferences. Once this list has been filled out you can share it with your adult children to help them understand your point of view. Read each statement. If the statement is generally true, write "yes" in the space at the left; if the statement is generally untrue, write "no" in the space.

- _____1. I feel like an important member of my family, and my opinions and advice are respected by members of my family.
- _____2. It is a burden for me to do many of the things I do for my children, but they seem to need my contribution. I'd rather not feel that I need to do these things.
- _____3. I think it is a good idea for my children to keep their problems from me to protect me from stress.
- _____4. My children should be able to help me more than they do.
- _____5. I would rather take advantage of special transportation, senior centers, Meals-on-Wheels, and other such services than burden my children with the responsibility of providing these services for me.
- _____6. I would like to move to a warmer climate rather than stay in my present home.
- _____7. I think I would be happier in a modern, new apartment, a senior citizen's condominium, or a high-rise building with congregate dining than in my present home.
- _____8. I never want to go into a nursing home no matter what circumstances should come up.
- _____9. My personal privacy is extremely important to me. I would have a very difficult time adapting if I ever needed such personal assistance as toileting and bathing.
- _____10. I have managed to adjust well to my circumstances and seldom feel lonely, depressed, or worried about the future.
- _____11. I do not want to be very active or involved anymore. I am content to spend a lot of time at home alone.
- _____12. I feel that I need help in making practical decisions about my life.
- _____13. I would like my children to take the burden of decision making from me if I become frail or sick.
- _____14. I feel that if I become seriously ill, my child who is a religious should take responsibility for seeing that I get the care I need.
- _____15. If I become seriously ill, I would move to be near my child who is a religious.
- _____16. If I become seriously ill, I would want my child who is a religious to leave his or her apostolic work temporarily in order to care for me.
- _____17. I feel that my children should be aware of my financial situation and the location of my will in case I should become seriously ill.
- _____18. If I become seriously ill and am unable to make decisions, I hope that my children will have heroic measures used to continue my life.
- _____19. I have very definite ideas about the funeral arrangements I want for myself.
- _____20. If I contract an unusual disease, I would like my body to be used for research on that disease after my death.

Part Two

How Well Do You Know Your Aging Parents?

Directions: This exercise has been designed to help you learn how well you understand your aging parent(s). There are no right or wrong answers. Read each statement. If you think the statement is generally true, write "yes" in the space at the left; if you think the statement is generally untrue, write "no" in the space.

- _____1. My parent is an important member of the family, and opinions and advice from my parent are respected by the rest of the family.
- _____2. I should not let my parent do things for me because enough has been done for me throughout my life and it is time for my parent to relax and enjoy life.
- _____3. I should keep my problems from my parent to protect my parent from stress.
- _____4. I sometimes feel guilty because I am unable to help my parent enough either financially or by spending time with my parent.
- _____5. I think it is all right for my parent to use such community services as special transportation, senior centers, and Meals-on-Wheels, rather than relying on me and other members of the family.
- _____6. My parent would be better off moving to a warmer climate than staying in the present home.
- _____7. My parent would be much happier in a modern, new apartment than in the present home.
- _____8. If special care should ever be needed, my parent would hate going into a nursing home.
- _____9. Personal privacy is important to my parent. If he/she ever needs such personal care as bathing and toileting, my parent will have great difficulty adapting to it.
- _____10. My parent has made an excellent adjustment to aging and is seldom lonely, depressed, or worried about the future.
- _____11. My parent doesn't want to be active and involved anymore and is content to spend a lot of time home alone.
- _____12. My parent needs my help in making practical decisions.
- _____13. If my parent becomes frail or sick, I should help by taking over the burden of decision making.
- _____14. If my parent became seriously ill, he/she would want me to take responsibility for seeing that the necessary care is provided.
- _____15. If my parent became seriously ill, he/she would want to move to be near me.
- _____16. If my parent became seriously ill, he/she would want me to leave my apostolic work in order to provide the necessary care.
- _____17. My parent would like the opportunity to discuss finances and the location of the will with me so that I could be more helpful if he/she becomes seriously ill.
- _____18. If my parent could not make the decision, I would encourage heroic measures to prolong my parent's life.
- _____19. I know the type of funeral arrangements that would best please my parent and I will be capable of carrying out these wishes.
- _____20. If my parent contracts an unusual disease, he/she would want to contribute to medical knowledge by having his/her body used for research on the disease.

worded for adult children entitled "How Well Do You Know Your Aging Parents?" When both sets of statements are completed, they are compared to see whether the answers of the parents and those of the children agree. When the answers are the same, there is clearly a shared understanding of the issues. Differing answers indicate that discussion of the issues is needed for improved communication and understanding.

Parents and adult children have used the Exercise and have found their ensuing discussions to be helpful and enlightening. Subsequent sharing of the initial discussion with siblings allowed them to understand how parents *really* felt as opposed to how adult children *guessed* they felt.

Following Sister Anne Bickford's article "Middle-Aged Religious With Aging Parents" (*Human Development*, Fall 1981), the Exercise was modified with statements included specifically for use by adult children who are religious. The modified Exercise can be used to help clarify expectations for everyone—parents, religious, and siblings. Family discussion after completion of the Exercise could improve family relations, contribute to better communication, assist in planning for parents' needs, and stimulate early intervention in problem situations.

The Exercise is not a panacea. The goal of the authors is to aid religious and their aging parents to make more definite plans and better decisions, relying on facts rather than assumptions. Using the Exercise does not negate faith in God's omnipotence and providence; rather, it gives the religious a tool to help meet the needs of aging parents.

The authors will appreciate feedback about the value of the Exercise. If you use it, please complete the simple response form that follows the Exercise and mail it to the authors. If sufficient responses are received within a year, the results will be analyzed as a means of improving the Exercise. This process could form the basis of another article evaluating the merits of the Exercise as a tool for aiding religious in developing better communication with their parents.

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Response Form for An Exercise in Understanding

1. Your age: _____ years
2. Your sex: M F
3. How long have you been a religious? _____ years
4. Age of your mother: _____ years
5. Age of your father: _____ years
6. Mother's occupation (include homemaker): _____
7. Father's occupation: _____
8. How many siblings do you have? _____
9. Does at least one sibling live within one hour's drive of your parents? _____ yes _____ no
10. How long a drive is it to your parents?
_____ 1 hour _____ 1-5 hours _____ 5+ hours
11. How would you rate the health of your mother?
_____ Excellent _____ Good _____ Fair _____ Poor
12. How would you rate the health of your father?
_____ Excellent _____ Good _____ Fair _____ Poor
13. Did you find the Exercise in Understanding helpful?
_____ yes _____ no
14. As a result of this exercise, have you and your parents made a specific plan for the future? _____ yes _____ no
15. Which statement was most helpful to you in stimulating discussion? (Circle only *one* number) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.
16. Are there any statements you would suggest deleting?
_____ yes _____ no
17. If answer to 16 is yes, circle the numbers of the statements you would delete.
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.
18. Please write comments or questions you think might be helpful. Thank you.

Please return this response form to:

Sister Patricia Mulvaney, C.S.C.
1932 Foster Avenue
Ventura, California 93001

The results will be analyzed and made available if there is sufficient response.

Learning Leadership from WATERSHIP DOWN

JOHN CARROLL FUTRELL, S.J., S.T.D.

Whenever individuals come together and organize themselves as a community, it is in order to realize a common goal. This shared goal is the communion that bonds the members and causes them to make corporate commitments and set up the unifying machinery of authority. For example, the communion of a faith community such as a religious congregation is the shared experience of the call from God to engage in the mission of the Church in a specific way. The members will need to discern corporate commitments concerning community life-style and choice of ministries, and they will have to design unifying functions of authority to realize their communion in human community. Leadership in such a situation involves enabling the faith community to carry out the ministries to which God calls its members now.

All christian ministry is communication of the experience of Christ's call by expressing this experience in all one's relationships. Communication of the experience is achieved through the quality of presence of the minister mediated through human service. Thus, ministry of leadership in the church is, through the quality of the leader's presence, bringing to the members of a community the shared experience that Christ is in us calling us together to carry out the mission of the church through our corporate ministries. The challenge to the leader of a christian community is

to enable all the members to realize their God-given communion in human community.

A program designed to help persons meet this challenge is "Focus on Leadership," which recently moved from Ministry Training Services in Denver to Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington. For several years a book designated as required reading in this program has been a novel about rabbits, the beautifully written *Watership Down*, by Richard Adams. It was called to my attention by an acquaintance who is director of a university graduate program in management. He told me that *Watership Down* was the best book he knew about leadership. I read it forthwith and in the descriptions of the four rabbit warrens I found wonderfully revelatory insights into the dynamics of community and leadership. I shall briefly summarize these dynamics in the warren life of the rabbits and reflect upon what they reveal about community and leadership.

The rabbit warren, like a civil society, has as its basic communion the common goal of survival of the members. It is for this reason that the rabbits remain together, make corporate commitments, and set up the unifying machinery of authority. Ways of realizing the common goal can be very different in different rabbit warrens, as they are in civil societies. This fact is very clear in the four quite different rabbit warrens described in *Wa-*

tership Down. (Page citations, in parentheses, are from the Avon Books paperback edition first published in 1975, used with permission of Macmillan Publishing Company.)

SANDLEFORD WARREN

Adams introduces the reader to his rabbit characters and their way of life first of all in Sandleford Warren. This is a model of what I call authoritarian community. The leader, or Chief Rabbit, of this warren, called the Threarah, is aging and set in his ways. Cool-headed and efficient, he already has all the answers. Thus, although he is polite toward his subjects, he does not listen to advice. When the clairvoyant little rabbit Fiver through his brave brother Hazel communicates news of impending danger to the Threarah, his final response is, "Well, it's really been extremely good of you to come and see me, Walnut. I appreciate it very much indeed. And I shall think over all you've said most carefully, you can be quite sure of that." (21) The leader as a matter of form indicates that he does listen, but this is just a pose. He is so remote from the members of the warren that he does not even remember Hazel's name, calling him Walnut. Actually, the Chief Rabbit is highly annoyed that he was approached at all, since he expects subordinate superiors to protect him from subjects' concerns. A member of the Owsla (the military troops of the Chief Rabbit) named Bigwig, who took Hazel and Fiver to the Threarah, pays for this transgression, "Bigwig, as . . . predicted, was getting his head bitten off." (21)

The rabbits of Sandleford Warren really no longer expect that the leader will listen to others. One of them says to Hazel, "You didn't really think the Chief Rabbit would act on your advice, did you? What were you expecting?" (22) The authoritarian style of leadership does not allow for the possibility that there might be another way than one's own. "The Threarah doesn't like anything he hasn't thought of himself." (24) Since the leader is closed to hearing new evidence, he does not adapt to new situations. Consequently, when his subjects are confronting danger, they do not turn to him for leadership. When men come to destroy their warren, the last one the rabbits think of turning to for guidance is their leader. "What did the Threarah say?" asked Silver. "I've no idea. I didn't ask him and neither did anyone else as far as I know." (160) With no confidence in leadership, followers become paralyzed. "I was bewildered and I lost all idea of warning the Threarah. After that I just sat where I was." (162) When danger is imminent, the farsighted rabbits under the leadership of Hazel abandon the warren (25–30). Finally, the closed-minded, authoritarian style of leadership of the Threarah leads to disastrous destruction of the warren (145–166).

Reflecting on leadership and community as ex-

perienced in faith communities of corporate mission to which we belong—the church, a diocese, a parish, a religious community, a ministry team—in the light of Sandleford Warren can be salutary as well as frightening if we find our dynamics to be similar. Authoritarian community is characterized by a remote leader highly conscious of being *the* authority. The leader insulates self from contact with community members beyond that at a polite social level. Care is taken to put subordinate superiors between the leader and the members in hierarchical fashion. They are expected to protect the leader from community members, and they are called to account if they fail to do so. Should confrontation on an issue of concern prove unavoidable, the leader tries to give the impression of listening, while actually being annoyed at the implicit suggestion that he or she is not all-knowing and does not already have all the answers. Inevitably, in a complex and changing world, the leader's "answers" no longer fit the signs of the times, which can be adequately understood only through collegial participation in gathering the evidence. Since the leader refuses to listen to community members, the real evidence is not clarified. At this point, some members, despairing of change and fearful of consequences, choose to leave the community. The morale of those who remain in it becomes lower and lower. With no hope in the leader, they gradually become apathetic and inactive. If no external disaster destroys such a community, in the long run it will simply atrophy. Community life must be animated by true leadership or die.

Although authoritarian community was perhaps the most common model in religious life until Vatican II, it is rarely seen now. However, I have the impression that this model is still found in more than a few dioceses and parishes. Given the signs of our times, authoritarian community is death-dealing. If on reflection persons find that these are the dynamics of leadership in their own communities, they should make every effort to change them.

COWSLIP'S WARREN

This warren is a model of what I call passive community. The rabbit that offers his hospitality to Hazel and his companions is named Cowslip. Nevertheless, he is not the Chief Rabbit. In this warren, there is no Chief Rabbit. Each individual chooses what to do. One of the rabbits, Strawberry, answers Hazel's question about this situation: "We don't call anyone Chief Rabbit," he said. "It was Cowslip's idea to go and see you this afternoon, so he was the one who went." (83) All needs are provided in this warren and all dangers removed, except the reality of the traps set by the farmer to catch the fattened-up rabbits whom he feeds and guards from natural enemies. Thus, the climate of the warren becomes passive:

The rabbits became strange in many ways, different from other rabbits. They knew well enough what was happening. But even to themselves, they pretended that all was well, for the food was good, they were protected, they had nothing to fear but the one fear; and that struck here and there, never enough at a time to drive them away. (123)

Passive community is characterized by having no common goal; therefore, there is no need for a leader.

They had no Chief Rabbit—no, how could they?—for a Chief Rabbit must be El-ahrairah to his warren and keep them from death; and here there was no death but one, and what Chief Rabbit could have an answer to that? (123)

Although everyone is comfortable in this passive community and each one free to be as individualistic as one could want, the pervasive feeling is one of melancholy. There is no real joy:

"They're very nice and kind," answered Pipkin, "but I'll tell you how they strike me. They all seem terribly sad. I can't think why, when they're so big and strong and have this beautiful warren. But they put me in mind of trees in November." (88)

At times during recent years the dynamics of leaderless, passive community modeled by Cowslip's warren characterized certain local religious communities made up of persons overreacting against the traditionally authoritarian style of superiors. Knowing that this style had become in-

sufferable and surely must go, some persons mistakenly identified the style with the *function* of the leader. To be liberated from the style, therefore, they did away altogether with the unifying function of authority. Thus, the one shared commitment in such communities was to leave each individual free to do "one's own thing." Living together provided a comfortable, secure environment and a superficial social-support system, as in a fraternity or a sorority. As long as this was all that an individual was seeking in community, such groups could survive. Many of these ceased to exist, however, because religious began to be conscious of more profound personal goals and to desire communion with other persons at a deeper level and, thus, to form community by making corporate commitments and enabling leaders to exercise the unifying function of authority. It would astonish me greatly if within a few years all such leaderless religious communities have not disappeared. Although, at first, such communities can look attractive, eventually the members seem to be like trees in November.

EFRAFA WARREN

This warren is a model of what I call totalitarian community. The communion of this warren is fear of humans as threatening the survival of the rabbits. Thus, the life-style is entirely ordered to hide the existence of the warren. The Owsla military guard absolutely controls the life of each individual rabbit: "You can't call your life your own; and in return you have safety—if it's worth having at the price you pay." (238)

AUTHORITARIAN LEADERSHIP STYLE (COMMON BEFORE VATICAN II)

LEADER OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY IS

- 1 INSULATED
- 2 PROTECTED BY SUBORDINATE SUPERIORS
- 3 NOT LISTENING TO COMMUNITY MEMBERS
- 4 OFFERING SOLUTIONS NOT FITTING THE PROBLEMS

The cruel and tyrannical Chief Rabbit is General Woundwort, who grew up hating humans because of those who killed his mother and father and caged him. His leadership is imposed by the force of his extraordinary physical size and his mercilessness in fighting and killing. Woundwort is driven by enormous hunger for more power and a bigger kingdom (307–319). He has developed a clever, nearly foolproof system to keep all the rabbits under rigid control. Needing the loyalty of the Owsla, he rewards its members with the best mates and food and more freedom than the others. Not merely a bully, Woundwort knows how to draw out the courage and competition of the Owsla rabbits (310). His style of leadership is that of an absolute dictator who demands total obedience motivated by force and fear. A rabbit, Blackavar, who tried to run away from the warren is brutally punished (242), then is displayed as a horrible example of what happens to the disobedient (320).

The entire community is structured rigidly by rules enforced by heavy sanctions (239; cf. 309). The effect of this structure on the rabbits of Efrafa Warren is to render them unable to do anything but what they are told to do (240). No responsibility is given to them and no initiative is tolerated: “Everything unusual has to be reported.” (338) Thus, the rabbits are generally subdued and docile: “Every rabbit in Efrafa usually does what he’s told without question.” (244) Any dissension is dealt with ruthlessly (313), and with a little effort it is always possible to find someone to punish (317). Finally, given the leadership of Bigwig and the guarantee of outside help from Hazel’s group of rabbits, some of the rabbits are desperate enough to risk escape (353–368).

The dynamics of leadership of totalitarian community are such that total efficiency is achieved. Nevertheless, the members are ruled by fear and the desire to escape, if possible. Most of them, however, simply exist without hope. Abuse of power and cruelty on the part of subordinate superiors is normal. It is a community of shared misery. There is always the risk in any human community, including faith communities, of tyrants emerging and forcefully imposing totalitarian community. It is important that the church community at every level find ways of bringing those whom we call to leadership to accountability and that collegial participation call forth the initiative of all the members in the process of realizing our communion in community.

WATERSHIP DOWN WARREN

This warren, central to the novel, is a model of participative community. It is formed by those who choose to leave Sandleford Warren because of the shared goal of survival and of seeking a happy life together. In attempting to realize this communion, the members come to recognize the unique gifts of

**Although, at first,
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each individual and integrate these into corporate strength for the common good of the community.

Since leaving the warren of the snares [Cowslip’s], they had become wrier, shrewder, a tenacious band who understood each other and worked together. There was no more quarreling. The truth about the warren had been a grim shock. They had come closer together, relying on and valuing each other’s capacities. They knew now that it was on these and on nothing else that their lives depended, and they were not going to waste anything they possessed between them. In spite of Hazel’s efforts beside the snare, there was not one of them who had not turned sick at heart to think that Bigwig was dead and wondered, like Blackberry, what would become of them now. Without Hazel, without Blackberry, Buckhorn and Pipkin—Bigwig would have died. Without himself he would have died, for which else, of them all, would not have stopped running after such punishment? There was no more questioning of Bigwig’s strength, Fiver’s insight, Blackberry’s wits or Hazel’s authority. When the rats came, Buckhorn and Silver had obeyed Bigwig and stood their ground. The rest had followed Hazel when he roused them and, without explanation, told them to go quickly outside the barn. Later, Hazel had said that there was nothing for it but to cross the open pasture and under Silver’s direction they had crossed it, with Dandelion running ahead to reconnoitre. When Fiver said the iron tree was harmless, they believed him. (129)

Hazel gradually emerges as the Chief Rabbit, because the others recognize and affirm his leadership qualities and in doing so call these forth.

Hazel's leadership style is an excellent model of the dynamics of leadership that unifies members in authentic community

"Oh, Hazel," said Blackberry, coming up to him round a puddle in the gravel. "I was so tired and confused, I actually began to wonder whether you knew where you were going. I could hear you in the heather, saying 'Not far now,' and it was annoying me. I thought you were making it up. I should have known better. Frithrah, you're what I call a Chief Rabbit!" (64)

The emergence of the leader in this way takes time until all have come to affirm and foster the leadership qualities.

"Come on, get busy," he said . . .

"We've been digging all the afternoon, Hazel—"

"I know. I'll come and help you," said Hazel, "in just a little while. Only get started. The night's coming."

The astonished rabbits obeyed him, grumbling. Hazel's authority was put to something of a test, but held firm with the support of Bigwig, although he had no idea what Hazel had in mind . . . (192)

Finally, all came to place full confidence in the leadership of Hazel. In contrast to Efrafa Warren, a totalitarian community where the members and leaders can conceive of authority only in terms of power and force, the members of Watership Down do not make their strongest member, Bigwig, their leader but call Hazel to leadership because of his capability to unite all of them to achieve their common goals. To the rabbits of Efrafa Warren, Bigwig was known as Thlayli.

Thlayli's reply, when it came, was low and gasping, but perfectly clear.

"My Chief Rabbit has told me to defend this run and until he says otherwise I shall stay here." "His Chief Rabbit?" said Vervain, staring. It had never occurred to Woundwort or any of his officers that Thlayli was not the Chief Rabbit of his warren. Yet what he said carried immediate conviction. He was speaking the truth. And if he was not the Chief Rabbit, then somewhere close by there must be another, stronger rabbit than he was. A stronger rabbit than Thlayli. (451)

Hazel's leadership style is an excellent model of the dynamics of leadership that will unify members in authentic community. By getting to know each individual, the leader is able to call forth the unique gifts of each member and integrate these into corporate strength for the common good. Rather than feeling that he knows all the answers, as did the Threarah in Sandleford Warren, Hazel seeks the advice of others according to their special gifts and wisdom.

"What should we do, Hazel, do you think?" asked Silver. "It's true what he [Cowslip] said, isn't it? These scrapes—well, we can crouch in them out of the weather, but no more than that. And as we can't all get into one, we shall have to split up."

"We'll join them together," said Hazel, "and while we're doing that I'd like to talk about what he said. Fiver, Bigwig, and Blackberry, can you come with me? The rest of you split as you like." (74)

"Blackberry," said Hazel, "what did you think of our visitor and how would you like to go to his warren?" . . .

"Fiver?"

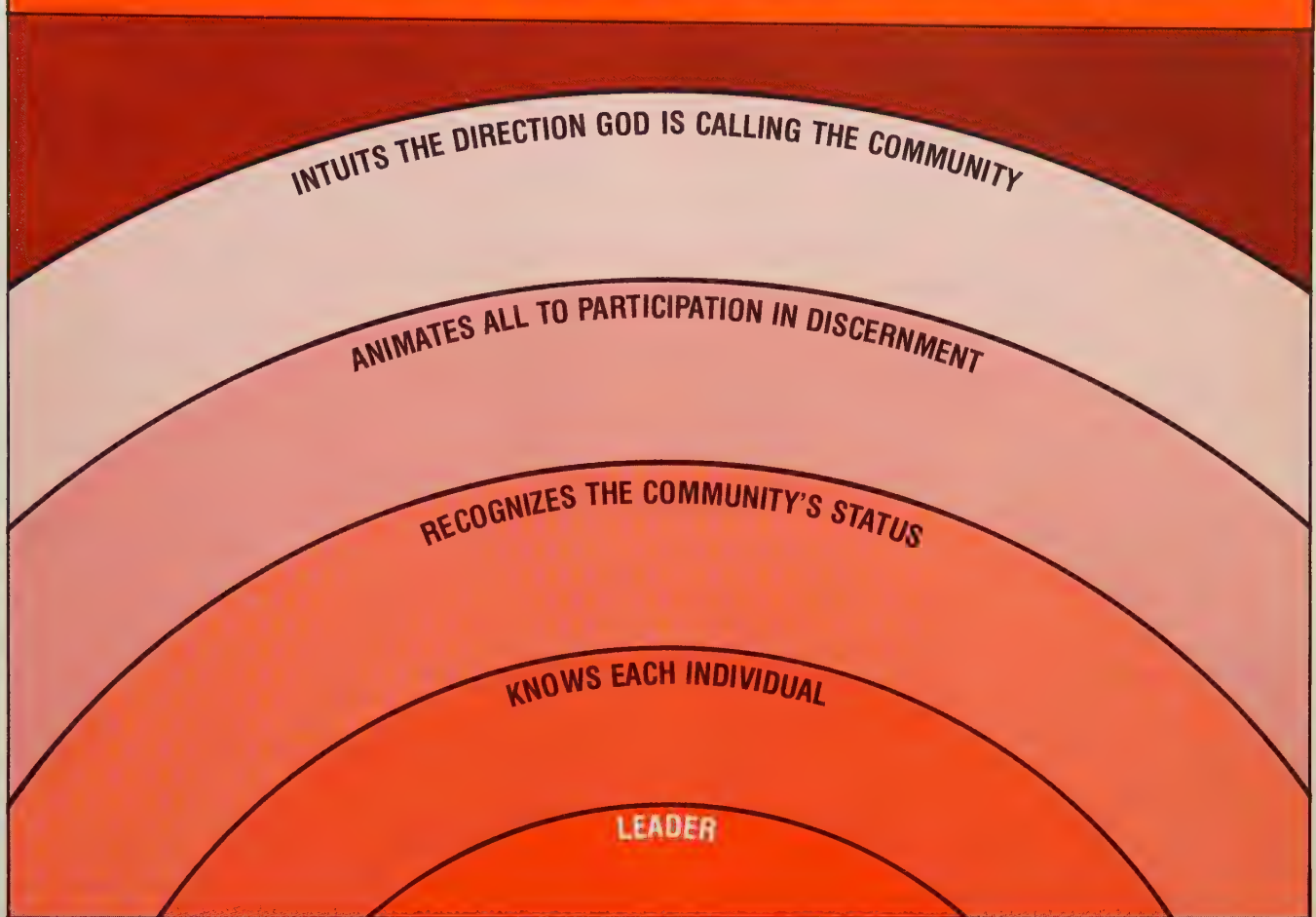
"I think we ought to have nothing to do with that rabbit or his warren. We ought to leave this place at once. But what's the good of talking?"

Cold and damp, Hazel felt impatient. He had always been accustomed to rely on Fiver and now, when he really needed him, he was letting them down. Blackberry's reasoning had been first-rate and Bigwig had at least shown which way any sound-hearted rabbit would be likely to lean. Apparently the only contribution Fiver could make was this beetle-spirited vapouring. He tried to remember that Fiver was undersized and that they had had an anxious time and were all weary. (76)

The leader who invites initiative and seeks to know the ideas and desires of the members of a community inevitably will find that he or she receives contradictory advice at times. As happened to Hazel, who did not accept Fiver's accurate advice, the leader's final decision on occasion may turn out to be mistaken, which will not surprise the leader who is aware of not having all the answers. Such a leader will continue to seek advice on all major decisions.

"That reminds me," said Hazel. "I meant to ask you. There was one thing at that terrible warren of Cowslip's that I admired very much—the great burrow. I'd like to copy it. It's a wonderful idea to

PARTICIPATIVE STYLE OF RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP



have a place underground where everybody can be together—talk and tell stories and so on. What do you think? Could it be done?"

Bigwig considered. "I know this," he said. "If you make a burrow too big the roof starts falling in. So if you want a place like that you'll need something to hold the roof up. What did Cowslip have?"

"Tree roots."

"Well, there are those where we're digging. But are they the right sort?"

"We'd better get Strawberry to tell us what he knows about the great burrow." (141–142)

Knowing the hopes and fears and weaknesses and strengths of each member of the community enables the leader to be sensitive toward all, while looking to the common good.

He [Hazel] felt so curious to visit it that he did not stop to make any detailed arrangements about the order in which they should go down. However, he

put Pipkin immediately behind him. "It'll warm his little heart for once," he thought, "and if the leaders do get attacked, I suppose we can spare him easier than some." Bigwig he asked to bring up the rear. "If there's any trouble, get out of it," he said, "and take as many as you can with you." (79)

Members of the community who enjoy the leader's affirmation of their gifts will also recognize and call forth the leader's gifts.

"Well, you're the fellow for ideas," said Hazel. "I never know anything until you tell me." "But you go in front and take the risks first," answered Blackberry. "We've all seen that." (139)

Leaders who invite collegial participation in making decisions will recognize when their own feelings and desires must be let go for the good of the community. Such leaders will not be threatened by admitting their own limitations and calling on the

Each person's human needs and limitations and weaknesses must also be known so that no one is overburdened

strengths and talents of others. Because all the members of the community are involved in the decision making process, all finally own the decision, even if some might have preferred a different one.

"I'm sure that's right," said Hazel. "We'll send four rabbits: and they can explain how we come to be in this difficulty and ask to be allowed to persuade some does to come back with them. I don't see how any Chief Rabbit can object to that. I wonder which of us would be the best to send?"

"Hazel-rah, you musn't go," said Dandelion. "You're needed here and we don't want to risk you. Everyone's agreed on that." Hazel had known already that they would not let him lead the embassy. It was a disappointment, but nevertheless he felt that they were right. The other warren would have little opinion of a Chief Rabbit who ran his own errands. Besides, he was not particularly impressive in appearance or as a speaker. This was a job for someone else.

"All right," he said. "I knew you wouldn't let me go. I'm not the right fellow anyway—Holly is. He knows everything about moving in the open, and he'll be able to talk well when he gets there."

No one contradicted this. Holly was the obvious choice. But to select his companions was less easy. Everyone was ready to go, but the business was so important that they considered each rabbit in turn, discussing who would be the most likely to survive the long journey, to arrive in good shape and to go down well in a strange warren. Bigwig, rejected on the grounds that he might quarrel in strange company, was inclined to be sulky at first, but he came around when he remembered that he could go on looking after Kehaar. Holly himself wanted to take Bluebell, but as Blackberry said, one funny joke at the expense of the Chief Rabbit might ruin every-

thing. Finally, they chose Silver, Buckhorn, and Strawberry. (200–201)

The leader who truly listens to community members will also be open to persuasion to change his or her mind.

"Well you won't be able to dash up to the arch," said Fiver, "with your leg. The best thing you can do is to get on the boat and have the rope gnawed half through by the time we come back. Silver can look after the fighting, if there's going to be any."

Hazel hesitated. "But some of us are probably going to get hurt. I can't stay behind."

"Fiver's right," said Blackberry. "You *will* have to wait on the boat, Hazel. We can't risk your being left to be picked up by the Efrafans. Besides, it's very important that the rope should be half gnawed—that's a job for someone sensible. It mustn't break too soon or we're finished."

It took them some time to persuade Hazel. When at last he agreed, he was still reluctant." (352)

The leader who possesses the qualities modeled by Hazel will inspire a true feeling of trust in the followers.

"I expect I'm being silly, though, Hazel. You brought us here and I'm sure it must be a fine, safe place." (88)

Fiver, absurdly small beside the hulking Bigwig, turned to Hazel with an air of happy confidence. (140)

One of the qualities to be desired in a leader is ability to recognize the signs of the times—to be able to see new demands created by new situations and to lead sometimes reluctant community members in accepting needed adaptations and changes.

"Well," said Hazel, "the idea is simply that in our situation, we can't afford to waste anything that might do us good. We're in a strange place we don't know much about and we need friends. Now Elil [rabbit-eating animals] can't do us good, obviously, but there are many creatures that aren't Elil—birds, mice, Yonil [hedgehogs] and so on. Rabbits don't usually have much to do with them, but their enemies are our enemies for the most part. I think we ought to do all we can to make these creatures friendly. It might turn out to be well worth the trouble." (169)

The leader who has come intimately to know each individual member of the community gradually develops an intuitive feeling for what the needs of the whole group are. Knowing where each individual is makes it easy to recognize where the community is as a group. Thus, in a faith community the leader functions as a group spiritual director, noticing movements of group consolation and desolation and discerning how the whole community is called to respond together to the word of God mediated here and now. Blessed with such a leader,

the members of a community come to expect accurate decisions and to be ready to carry these out wholeheartedly.

"We're doing well here," he [Hazel] began, "or so it seems to me. We're certainly not a bunch of Hles-sil [wandering rabbits without a warren] any more. But all the same, there's something on my mind. I'm surprised, as a matter of fact, that I should be the first one of us to start thinking about it. Unless we find the answer, then this warren's as good as finished, in spite of all we've done."

"We have no does—not one—and no does means no kittens and in a few years no warren."

It may seem incredible that the rabbits had given no thought to so vital a matter. But men have made the same mistake more than once—left the whole business out of account, or been content to trust to luck and the fortune of war. Rabbits live close to death and when death seems closer than usual, thinking about survival leaves little room for anything else. But now, in the evening sunshine on the friendly, empty down, with a good burrow at his back and the grass turning to pellets in his belly, Hazel knew that he was lonely for a doe. The others were silent, and he could tell that his words had sunk in. (193)

Hazel's anxiety and the reason for it were soon known to all the rabbits and there was not one who did not realize what they were up against. There was nothing very startling in what he had said. He was simply the one—as a Chief Rabbit ought to be—through whom a strong feeling, latent throughout the warren, had come to the surface." (194)

The dynamics of leadership in participative community modeled by Hazel in the *Watership Down* Warren lead to a community where goals are successfully achieved, the individual members are happy, and mutual relationships excellent. These are the dynamics that should be constantly fostered in faith communities of corporate mission today.

CONCLUSIONS DRAWN

Reflecting on the dynamics of leadership illustrated in the four rabbit warrens of *Watership Down*, it is clear that the quality of life of a community will be determined largely by the quality of

its leadership. A faith community of corporate mission—the church, a diocese, a parish, a religious community, a ministry team—should seek to recognize among its members those persons who are gifted with such leadership qualities, to affirm these and call forth and enable the delegated person to exercise the unifying function of authority: to unite all the companions for achieving their common goal of bringing the Kingdom to come. The leader of a faith community of corporate mission must take the time to learn to know each individual intimately on the level of faith, since the communion of such a group is a shared experience of God calling all to mission together. The leader must know each one's gifts and strengths to be able to call these forth and to integrate them as corporate strength to carry out the mission. Each person's human needs and limitations and weaknesses must also be known so that no one is overburdened and everyone's continual human development is fostered. The leader must be able to facilitate mutual communication among the members so that they always grow in mutual understanding, love, and support—as a happy community. All of this requires a leader who can inspire deep trust.

Through knowing each individual, the leader will become someone who can discern where the group is as a group and who can animate all to collegial participation in making important community decisions through communal discernment. Finally, such a leader will intuitively feel how God is calling the group now—"as a Chief Rabbit ought to" (194)—so that even those who could not participate in making the decision "would accept what he [she] had said without having heard him [her] at all." (199)

May all of us who are called to faith communities of corporate mission be blessed with such leaders.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Leadership Series. Nine sets of cassettes on leadership and community building, by John Carroll Futrell, S.J., Marian Cowan, C.S.J., Janice Futrell, O.S.B., and Richard Rice, S.J. For detailed information write to Ray Haiduk, Adventures in Growth, P.O. Box 806, Littleton, CO 80160.

Futrell, J. C. *Making an Apostolic Community of Love: The Role of the Superior According to St. Ignatius of Loyola.* St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1970.

SONG THAT

O Lord, our Lord,
how scrambled is your name
by nighttime country radios,
how faint the quasar pulse
of your news receding.
You have withdrawn your majesty
from heaven-quizzing eyes.

When we decode
the headlight beam
of galaxies
and plant our footsteps
on the backyard moon,
what is this spinoff
man
that you should search him out,
uncertain quantum
in a thronging wave?

But you pursue
this piece of cosmic junk
nudging him homeward
from his errant course.
We're told
a fireside of angels
ring him close
and deer
and dinosaurs come browsing.
How is this?

O Lord, our Lord,
how kitchen near you come,
a roman candle
arching back to flesh,
how many ladder steps
you struggled down,
and had old trousers on
and we all don today
your Sunday best.

(Reprinted and revised from
Signs of Life, 1970)

When Catholic church music in the United States got its first airing out in the 1960s, the result was not altogether happy. "Mother dear, O pray for me" yielded its place to a succession of let's-get-together songs, many of them still with us, and confusedly romantic hymns ("I'll eat your strawberries, I'll drink your sweet wine"). "Mother dear" somehow managed to infuse its sugar into what followed. The importation of majestic Wesleyan hymns helped but did not quite strike the appropriate note for our times. Luther's "Mighty Fortress" struck a dissonant note. Fine Masses were composed by Fr. Clarence Rivers and by musicians classically trained, but their work left few traces in the songbooks.

Looking back on this enthusiastic but fiberless growth, do we find any of it mature and sturdy? We do observe at least one vigorous plant, whose roots are in the words and imagery of the psalms, shooting up through Pere Gelineau in France to Paul Quinlan in the USA, and thence outward into many branches and talents. Seminary groups and Sisters have seemed to take on strength, to make a qualitative leap, when basing themselves on the psalms. We have, in other words, produced our Catholic musical version of the tree of David and kept some link, almost in spite of ourselves, with that monastic era when choirs were neither "bare" nor "ruined" and psalms were what "the sweet birds sang."

This phenomenon of our musical history, the grafting of contemporary rhythms, melody, and religious feeling upon the abiding stock of the psalms, gives witness to them once more as the world's most durable body of prayer. The psalms, in their dual quality of prayer and song, reveal themselves as the heart's outburst: "O Lord, you search me and you know me" (139); "Save me, O God, for the water comes up to my neck" (69); "How awesome are your works, O Lord" (8). They squeeze in, they concentrate the whole religious quest and struggle. They touch upon what is most recurrent in our experience; they stir us to the depths. Singly and collectively, we tend through them toward the

SUMS US UP

JAMES TORRENS, S.J., Ph.D.

revealed truth of our being, with our whole equipment of heart, mind, and emotions.

What a gamut of reactions to God is run by the sayer of the psalms: open-eyed wonder of the one looking into the cosmos, the sense of how puny we are in face of this resplendent universe, the distance and sometimes apparent absence of God, the fragility and short life of man, melancholy and depression and struggle towards faith and confidence in the Shepherd of Israel, gratitude for our family history of providences, consolation, and peace in the holy life.

All of this gradually dawned on me over thirty years of daily utterance. St. Ambrose, I recently discovered in a breviary reading, said much the same in expanded form and glowing detail long ago. His observations concentrate in this sentence: "In a psalm instruction vies with beauty."

The psalm form is a shining example of art capitalizing on limitations of the material, in this case Hebrew—a restricted lexicon of modifiers, a slim choice of verbs, the inability of the language to form compounds—and compensating brilliantly. It does so by its parallelisms—the pairing of God's titles, the yoking of an abstract concept with a vivid particular, the expanding of initial images. It does so by its reversals of verbal position in the figure known as chiasmus—"be mine, O mountain of refuge! O fortified citadel, save me" (31). It does so, rhythmically and melodically, by its observance of a fixed number of stresses per line and by much echoing of sounds among words, which move us almost physically and heighten our response.

O God, my God, for you I long,
my soul ardently thirsts for you,
my body pines for you

More than parched earth yearns for drops of water.

The above version (and information) comes from the late Mitchell Dahood, S.J., whose long love for the psalms bore fruit in the Anchor Bible text and Introductions (with their emphasis on the grounding of the psalms in the poetry of the pagan Uga-

ritic world). Many before him have ranged and grouped the psalms, shown their place in temple cult, and traced the formation of the final collection over more than a century.

All this information helps; you can hardly learn enough about what you love. Yet most people entering the world of the psalms simply and directly, with no preparatory study, find them to express vividly what they have undergone, in darkness or light, and to be powerfully formative of their inner life. Everyone will have a different, and indeed shifting, list of favorites. (My own: 8, 33, 42, 65, 84, 91, 100, 103, 104, 126, 130, 131, 139.)

Still, and increasingly, something troubles me about the psalms these days. I seem suddenly to realize why Merton, who wrote so movingly of them and taught us the traditional four-fold way of praying them, e.g., in *Bread in the Wilderness*, felt ill at ease somehow in them. I now keep noticing, perhaps under the impact of the Israeli incursion into Lebanon, and with appalling proofs of the Christian-Moslem antipathy still strong, the prevalence in the psalms of the one word "enemy." Nelson's Concordance to the New American Bible lists the incidence of "enemy" or its variant "foe" on an average of once per psalm.

The psalms seem so unforgiving. There are always enemies of the sanctuary, foes digging a pit to catch us, the taunting of the wicked. The God of Sabaoth (of hosts) is "valiant in war" on behalf of the just, who are encouraged to call down thunder on their opposition. The just do not often prevail, in fact, so the psalms indulge in bemoaning and re-sound with continual laments. They do not seem manly in this respect. Ernesto Cardenal and Daniel Berrigan have helped me at least live with this feature of the psalms. Their paraphrases and Berrigan's crisp commentary accompanying his psalms in *Uncommon Prayer* remind me how privileged we are here in the United States, our faces shiny because of special treatment. Most people in the world have great cause to wring their hands, like Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof*. They experience

firsthand that, in Berrigan's words, "the conduct of the powerful is almost invariably a mockery of God." Berrigan, and Cardenal in *The Psalms of Struggle and Liberation* (translated by Emile McAnany), make me bite my tongue as I am about to proclaim the psalms paranoid. Cardenal's version of Psalm 129, written in Nicaragua under the shadow of Somoza, rings all too true.

From the depths I call to you Lord
I call out in the night from prison
from the concentration camp
from the torture chamber
in the hour of darkness
hear my voice

my S.O.S.

And Cardenal adds: "You are not implacable like them in their investigations."

Reading Berrigan's keen-edged rendition of psalms and thinking of other great versions—Mary Herbert's, Christopher Smart's—I realize that the psalms are there to challenge me and not just to be slipped into like shoes. Berrigan's concentration upon bristling images and passages is selective, intended as an antidote to "the narrow range of emotion, need, prescience, devotion, yearning" to which he sees us confining ourselves, "like a row of scrub-faced children, Sunday speeches tripping from their tongues" (p. 85). Here is a sample from Psalm 10:

Lord, why do you stand on the sidelines
silent as the mouth of the dead, the maw of the grave—

O living One, why? . . .
Eyes like a poniard impale the innocent
Death cheap, life cheaper. . .
Lord, they call you blind man. Call their bluff.

Uncommon Prayer, written under the prison shadow, never lets us forget that the way through

**The psalms were
composed to challenge
us and not to be slipped
into like shoes**

no man's land can be hard and dry. "Still," as Berrigan says, "in a dry time on earth it is a joy to return again and again to the psalms." Yes, provided we pray them as Our Lord did (he the epitome of the pious Jew), with his readiness to forgive, his confident faith ("Hope in God, O my soul" [42] is after all the dominant motif of the psalms), the boldness of his Spirit, the sense of a universal calling. And we have to put whatever there is of us—the intense drama of the everyday, the entirely christian, our fears and hopes for this planet—into our own paraphrase, this true *opus Dei*, living by the psalms.

CINEMA INSIDE THE MIND

MARLENE HALPIN, O.P., Ph.D., DONALD J. TYRELL, Ph.D.

Sister Marlene Halpin, a specialist in education for ministry, has recently published the book *Imagine That!* on fantasies and how they can be used in spiritual counseling.

The editors of *HUMAN DEVELOPMENT* asked Sister Halpin to write the following article in response to three questions we submitted to her about the mental faculty that produces the "pictures" the mind uses in performing a wide variety of its functions, including fantasy.

We asked her: (1) Why is imagination important? (2) What is a person with a well-developed imagination like? and (3) How can imagination be developed? She, with help from Donald J. Tyrell, generously replied with the interesting observations and insights that follow.

human, as we know ourselves to be. Without imagination Jesus might not have acted as Jesus did; nor might Hitler have behaved as Hitler did. Basically, imagination is important because: (1) it is necessary for most everyday thinking; (2) it is required for fully human, free choosing. This does not leave much human living unaffected.

Imagination, then, is an ordinary human power. It is part of our very being. Even the ancient philosophers—Aristotle, for instance—knew it was physically located in the brain. It is a power normally functioning people can use often and well and one that most of us could develop to be of greater personal service. Ordinarily we find enjoyment in the good use of our selves or any of our functions. Skills acquired through practice give pleasure when competently performed. Think back to the first time you tried to ride a bicycle, skate, dance, swim, or drive a car. If you persisted long enough for proficiency, think with what ease and pleasure you do those things now. So, too, with using your imagination.

SERVES AS A CONNECTOR

Many of us are well (if not overly) educated cognitively. What often is missing from education is emotion. Yet many morally and religiously motivated persons try to advance from cognitive

Imagination is inborn, a gift, ready made, there for us to develop. It is a capacity to represent things in their absence and in a variety of ways. Together with sense knowledge, memory, thinking, reasoning, and reflecting, imagination is part of the human cognitive complex. It gives us, you might say, a cinema, one that is just as close to us as the thoughts in our mind.

Without imagination human beings could not be

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ESSENTIAL STEPS TO DEVELOPING IMAGINATION

LEARN BEYOND THE RATIONAL

WILLING TO SURRENDER RATIONAL CONTROL

FIND A TEACHER/COMPANION

TRUST OWN ABILITY

GIVE SELF PERMISSION

WANT TO DEVELOP

knowing to spiritual activity directly. They fail, or succeed, in a kind of deprived way. If spirituality is spirituality of the whole person, affectivity is a vital component. Perhaps it might be spoken of as the difference between an academic lecture and a fine homily. Imagination, well used, serves as a connector between cognition and affectivity. It also connects the past and present to the future.

Perhaps its connecting function might be likened to overtones—the harmonics of musical tones. Overtones reverberate. They overlay and underlay tones, connecting, blending. The mixture makes music of depth. Were there no overtones music would lack the resonance we so enjoy. So too is the individual lacking who attempts to live exclusively on a cognitive, rational level.

Maybe it would be easier to look at imagination negatively: what would it be like to have none? Suppose we came across a modern-day Robinson Crusoe. Suppose that this sole survivor of a shipwreck finds no debris, no useful articles, no man Friday. To make the hypothetical case complete, suppose that not even imagination is present in this survivor. (That is a difficult supposition: imagination has to be used to imagine a state of no imagination.) At any rate, suppose.

What might be the state of affairs? A shelter would hardly be built, for it takes imagination to see alternate uses of things. Food would not be stored, for

imagination foresees seasons and provides for the future. Songs would not be sung; imagination is required to compose and to use the voice differently. Nor would tools be invented. No messages would be sent; writing, symbols, conveyances—all need imagination. A dismal plight. Inhuman, as we know human.

EVERYTHING POSSIBLE WITH LIMITS

This is not the normal human condition. From birth we have the capacity to imagine and the powers of sight, hearing, smelling, touching, tasting. These can act independently or combine in endless varieties of ways. Anything is possible in imagination. Its product is not subject to the ordinary limits of physical reality. But imagination is subject to limits.

Whatever is imagined has to be portrayed through a sense modality, in concrete form. For instance, we can easily imagine three or four or six apples in a row. But none of us can imagine, clearly and exactly, 53 or 827 apples in a row. Imagination cannot conceive of things in the abstract (like justice), although it can give a representation of justice (a blindfolded woman holding scales). Imagination can make new combinations of things (the glass mountain of fairy tales, or weaving straw into gold). And once having known real beings or things, imag-

ination is capable of representing them in a remarkable variety of combinations. Consider the monumental music Beethoven composed after his severe hearing loss, music he never heard except in his imagination.

We are able, at will, to allow images to emerge from our own internal experiences and resources. These images can evolve, seize, touch, arouse, and stimulate affectivity. People who worry a good deal when someone they love is inexplicably late imagine all sorts of harm having come to them. Fear overtakes them. On the other hand, imagining a visit with a loved one can produce pleasurable affection. Using imagination symbolically can provide the catalyst for important insights. For instance, one woman who imagined her pain as a leopard found herself petting the fearsome animal. It responded with contented purring. With some surprise she found herself saying, "Why, I don't have to be that afraid any more!" She then took steps to remove herself from a most unhealthy environment, thus reducing her pain by eliminating the fear that exaggerated it. Imagining is not a difficult thing to do. Often, doing it consciously and purposefully is a neglected activity.

Imagination makes us more accessible to ourselves. It helps deepen self-knowledge. For instance, we do not have to reflect long or hard on what we did so far today. Facile replies might come in answer to "Why?" More reflection and use of imagination are needed to see patterns, to be able to identify past experiences that are affecting today's activities. How often do good people refrain from confronting someone because "I don't want to hurt that person." A little more reflection, and some imagining of possible consequences, might prompt a more truthful answer: "I'm afraid of how that person might get even with me," or "I don't want to hear that one's response to my confrontation." If those answers are appropriate, they might be a lead-in to more self-knowledge.

MORAL DECISION MAKING

Imagination is crucial for good moral living. All choices and actions have their beginning in something that is known from the senses, thought, or memory. Memory tells us how similar incidents affected us—well or badly. From these perceptions we can imagine what a new situation might mean for us, or do to us. Imagination also supplies alternative modes of action. And it can visualize foreseeable consequences. After appraising possibilities, decisions are made and action taken.

The sequence in moral choosing can be delineated in four steps: (1) imagining alternative ways of acting, (2) letting the emotions of the situation be experienced consciously, (3) making a choice of a course of action, and (4) planning and implementing that choice. The first two stages (imagining and emoting) do not involve morality; yet

they are necessary steps preceding human action. Suppose we work that out in an example.

Someone is spreading a rumor about you. The office, neighborhood, or community gossip has hold of it. You are not paranoid; this is really happening. You know it to be true. Almost simultaneously you imagine what this can mean to you: who will believe it; what people will say; how they might treat you; how that might affect your reputation, your social standing, your job, your self-concept, your relationships. You are likely to experience a whole host of emotions: surprise, incredulity, anger, fear, resentment, and consequently, vindictiveness. What would you like to do to the one who started the rumor? Kill the person? Take some physically gruesome retaliation? Start a counter-gossip chain? Get to that person's friends and make trouble? Confront? Leave? Consideration of any of these sorts of things comes easily and occasions more emotions: anger and resentment spur us on to pleasure and satisfaction in imagining revenge and regaining control of the situation. Decisions are not yet made about how, in fact, we plan to handle the matter. Morality has not yet entered the picture.

The important moral point comes when—having considered the options—we elect to follow one definite course of action. Making choices is when the kind of human being we are becomes evident. The fact is that if alternatives are not explored (imaginatively)—even unacceptable alternatives—and that if feelings are not allowed to be felt (both pleasant and painful ones), we do not make choices as freely as we might. When options are unexplored, choices are less free. For instance, you will not kill the person, nor will you do gruesome physical things in retaliation, nor start a counter-gossip chain, nor go to the person's friends and make trouble. You could; and imagining such actions dissipates some of that emotional energy. However, those alternatives are contrary to your value system. Clearly you do not choose to act on them. Perhaps you might confront the person and try to negotiate the situation. Or, if experience reminds you that that course of action was unsuccessful, you might choose to talk it over with someone you trust, seeking counsel on how to handle it more productively. Your choice of action, given your values, follows a course true to your moral or immoral self.

One point needs underlining. In the whole process of dealing with the situation, imagination and feeling play key roles. When imagination is denied, then inevitably feelings are denied, and when feelings are denied, behavior is—at best—inadequate, truncated, and incomplete.

Suppose, when the rumor-spreader is met, you act as if nothing happened. You try to convince yourself that this is the "good," the "resigned," the "holy" thing to do. How adequate is your behavior toward that person? Superficially you might be

"nice." What is the atmosphere between you? Where is your authenticity? If that is how you love yourself, how are you loving your neighbor? (You cannot give what you do not have.) What kind of messages are you communicating to others? It might be the kind of situation that, verbally, is satisfied with "Oh, it's all right"; but the rumor-spreader is frozen out of your social sphere. Or the best response may be "I'm not angry. Really"; but you are withdrawn in the other's presence and critical outside it. Such behavior is likely to continue indefinitely unless a more honest response can be prompted.

PERSONS WITH IMAGINATION

Jesus had a well-developed imagination. So did Adolph Hitler. Their value systems were quite different. To answer the question "What is a person with a well-developed imagination like?" the person's value system has to be taken into account.

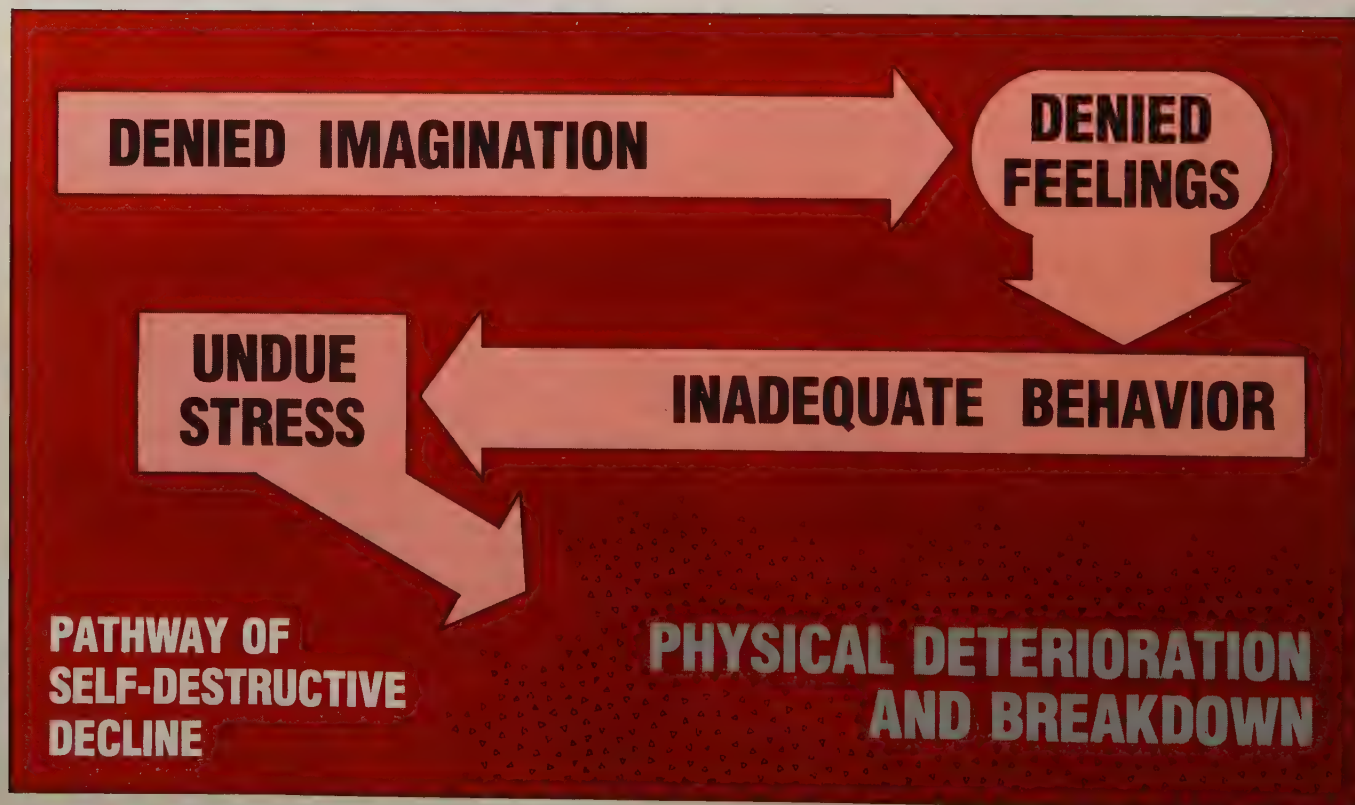
A well-developed imagination may keep a person fearful, suspicious, jealous, stressed, or paranoid. It can set goals and dream dreams, including those that will affect many other people. Imagination proposed a "pure race" in Hitler's case. This meant genocide. Ways to kill more people more efficiently were rewarded. Much imagination was used in Hitler's Germany for both destruction and survival. At the same time people say Hitler was well liked by

children. They enjoyed his imaginative interactions with them.

Jesus often taught in parables. Parables demand imagination, both in their composition and in their being understood. He trusted his own imagination, his hearers, and us. Who does not like a good story? This is a very good thing for counselors and spiritual directors to remember. Making a point or describing situations through parables can be a productive approach.

Given a value system closer to Jesus than to Hitler, a person with a well-developed imagination is more likely to be self-assured and empathetic, have a sense of humor, and be more flexible in behavior and response to others. An imaginative person is probably more lively, inventive, and productive, the kind of person you would want around both in times of trouble and at a picnic. Such a person is not easily threatened. When acted against offensively, for instance, an imaginative person is less likely to retaliate and more likely to wonder: "What might I have done to provoke that? I wonder if the other one had a fight at home earlier in the day? trouble on the job? a toothache?" and let it be.

Were someone to say, "No, I am not going tonight," the words could be taken at face value. The person is not going tonight. The issue is closed. A person using imagination could attend to the speaker's body posture, gestures, tone of voice, and



An imaginative person is more likely to be self-assured, empathic, humorous, and responsive to others

Einstein used to lament that he was using only seven percent of his potential. What a hard self-judgment! Beethoven, as was mentioned, composed some of his greatest music after he was deaf. Glenn Miller sought a "sound" his imagination told him was possible. He combined and recombined instruments in varying proportions until he achieved his "sound." Good cooks and good carpenters use imagination all the time in their work.

Imagination is also the road into our deeper selves. What is a "deeper self?" Anatomy and physiology do not provide the same kinds of answers as reflection and prayer do. Imaginatively, we can go beyond our present selves to what we might be and ought to be: to how we might develop concern for ourselves and others and how we might be more absorbed in prayer.

Counseling or spiritually directing imaginative people (who are willing to trust and be vulnerable in their truthfulness) can be a delight. Often it is easy to explain the things of one's life imaginatively. When asked about an unsatisfactory relationship, for instance, many long anecdotes have been avoided by a response like:

It strikes me that
When we play each other's piano,
We miss the keys,
Futilely striking the cracks between.

For an imaginative way to describe lovers, read again the *Canticle of Canticles* in the Old Testament.

DEVELOPMENT OF IMAGINATION

To begin to develop our imagination, we must acknowledge that we have this power and want to use it more productively. If we have a real desire to enlarge our lives, to enjoy and live them more fully, to deepen our self-knowledge, and—perhaps—to help others more effectively, then the first necessary step has been taken. Still, some might protest, "But I don't have a good imagination." Maybe this is so. Perhaps it would help to ask if they understand cartoons, read signs and maps effectively, or make or enjoy jokes. These are good clues to the presence of imagination.

People need to give themselves permission. No one else can. People might need to be consciously aware of childhood scoldings: "Stop daydreaming"; "You'll never amount to anything that way"; "Imagining is a sin." We need to be conscious of the obvious difference between imagination, on the one hand, and planning and doing, on the other. This approach holds true for both good and evil deeds. Mature adults often do well to reexamine principles they accepted as children.

Trusting your own ability to imagine is important. For many, especially for educated people, it takes some real effort not to think. Initially, it may be difficult to trust that images will rise spontane-

inflection of words. From these signals appropriate questions might be asked:

"Did no one ask you? Are you feeling unwanted? ignored? rejected?" "Are you not going of your own choice? Had you planned something else to do?" "Can you not afford to go? Have you not the clothes? the equipment?" "Are you feeling ill, perhaps?"

The other person is not only heard but listened to, understood, perhaps helped, certainly affirmed. There is no given, foolproof formula for such a situation. It involves a complex of perceptions sensitively and imaginatively considered—a very humanly valuable process.

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS ENRICHED

People who use imagination are quicker to be very good friends or fearsome enemies. Lovers find more ways to please; troublesome children, more ways to annoy. People-helpers discover ways to reinforce others; the self-righteous, to find fault; misanthropes, to persecute. Through imaginative contemplation of others (or oneself), we come to know the human person in a way that no testing can show. Whatever we understand the heart to be like, imaginative persons are more likely to act from the heart. Take the example of the one leper of ten whom Jesus healed. All ten did what he told them to do. One reacted from the heart and did more. He returned to say thank you. Empathy needs imagination. The grateful leper could imagine what thanking might mean to Jesus. People who use their imagination not only give well, they receive well. They appreciate the need of the giver to give and their own need to receive.

When we know ourselves and live truthfully, we may not be more popular, but we shall be more whole—and holy

ously into consciousness and to find out how to use those images productively. Letting images and possibilities emerge uncritically and fully before making decisions will be a new experience for some.

Finding a teacher or companion who can model imagination is important. Seeing imagination in action and how helpful it is encourages us to use it. Being affirmed in our use of it facilitates becoming increasingly skillful.

Most of us seem to relish being in cognitive control of our lives and day-to-day situations. We are quite secure in thinking: if a, then b; if b, then c; therefore—. In the imaginative stage of decision making, there is no censoring of sublime, silly, true, false, real, or fictional. What emerges, emerges. Later there will be time to ask "What might it mean?" and to make decisions.

ADDITIONAL ADVANTAGES

Imagination leads us to be more open to seeing what is there, to learning more than can be rationally identified, to making connections with our past, which helps to identify our present and affect our future. For those of us who are in some sort of people-helping occupation, such as counseling or providing spiritual direction, the use of imagination is a boon. Guiding fantasies, with a purpose (as against having free-floating daydreams), assists in identifying attitudes, affective memories, motives, and assumptions that spontaneously emerge.

Fantasy is a powerful method for articulating attitudes. When symbols are allowed to emerge, the

more primitive part of the brain—close to the brain stem—is used. This effort requires a lesser use of the more sophisticated cerebral cortex, which monitors, censors, rationalizes, and selects. Some examples will illustrate this process.

Blunt questions such as "How do you deal with authority?"; "How is your relationship with God?"; "In what ways do you respond to trouble in your life?"; "How do you relate to so and so?"; "What is your perception of yourself as a human being?" can elicit long, convoluted, often highly selective answers. Perhaps the way persons think they ought to be, or what they think the questioner wants to hear (or they want the questioner to hear), influences the response. By using fantasy, people are less apt to delude themselves or be unduly self-protective.

FOR WHOLENESS AND HOLINESS

When, by deliberate use of fantasy, we become aware of our unadorned, unexcused, unexplained, undefended perceptions, then we are more apt to modify, change, affirm, or discard them. When we rid ourselves of some of our denials (lies, self-conning, or even true unawareness of those aspects of ourselves), we are more authentically ourselves in thought and in behavior. When we know ourselves and live truthfully, we might become more popular or not; we might be easier to live with or not. However, we shall be more whole. And holy.

The truth is, there are so many things that affect us in our daily living that we cannot possibly, consciously, attend to all of them. Sometimes we are not aware of what is important or that it will be important at another time, in another context. Since imagination transcends time and can connect past, present, and future reality, it is of greatest use in putting things together. It is also true that many of us live in a psychological clutter. All we need (and more!) is there. Perhaps life is in disarray, as dresser-drawer contents dumped on a bed. Fantasies used well will find a pattern if it is there and, symbolically, select out what is relevant. How often do people, after a fantasy, say "I didn't know I knew that!", or "That's right! I wonder why I didn't think of it sooner!" In any event, using imagination is human and helpful in personal and interpersonal contexts. And it is readily available and accessible to us all.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

- Gendlin, E. T. *Focusing*. New York: Everest House, 1978.
- Halpin, M. *Imagine That!* Dubuque, Iowa: W. C. Brown, 1982. A teaching videotape on the subject is available.
- Montague, A. *Touching: The Human Significance of the Skin*. New York: Harper & Row, 1971.
- Tyrell, D. J. *Living by Choice*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1977.

Book Reviews

When Bad Things Happen to Good People, by Harold S. Kushner. New York: Schocken Books, 1981. 149 pp. \$10.95.

Confrontations with inexplicable suffering and death remain an inevitable part of living for us all. For some of us, conversations—and occasionally even arguments—about this tragic and apparently absurd dimension of life are an occupational hazard that cannot be easily avoided. Many of us have already learned valuable lessons from the social sciences about the psychosocial processes of suffering and death. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross has, for example, become standard pastoral reading. We have become much more sophisticated about the how to of pastoral care in such situations. But the questions of why continue to strain our theologies and frequently our own personal faith.

Rabbi Kushner has written a book that addresses an ancient and yet vividly contemporary question: Why do bad things continue to happen to good people? Why do innocent people become afflicted with all kinds of physical and psychological handicaps? Why do thousands of helpless people suffer and die each year in mindless and preventable accidents? Why do some good and dedicated men and women who have offered their lives to the service of the church find themselves emotionally crippled, severely depressed, and sometimes suicidal? How does a loving and powerful God fit into all this?

The questions raised in this book are profound and extremely complex; they have challenged philosophers and theologians for centuries. They are of equal concern for any humanistic psychology involving fundamental issues of meaning, value, and motivation. The author has not, however, writ-

ten a speculative or theoretical reflection of an exclusively theological or psychological nature. Rather, this is an intensely personal book written in simple and inspiring language and prompted by tragedy in the author's own family. His son, Aaron, suffered a disease known as progeria in which the normal aging process is accelerated. Aaron died with the features of an old man at age thirteen. His father reports that an aching sense of unfairness nearly overwhelmed him. Images of an all-wise and all-powerful God who cares for and watches over his loved ones were severely tested. The questions that constantly returned even to this deeply religious man were: Why should this happen to me? How and why does God allow such suffering in anyone's life—in my life?

These questions are as ambitious and arrogant as any envisioned by Job thousands of years ago. The answers sketched here are honest and deeply personal; they are, therefore, tentative and awesomely respectful of the mystery of life and death. We find in Kushner's narrative compelling psychological astuteness combined with keen theological and pastoral sensitivity. The book can be as personally challenging and profoundly enticing as a reader's own openness will allow. Anyone looking for doctrinal simplicity or spiritual niceties will be disappointed; any reader—of whatever religious persuasion—willing to share an intellectually hard and emotionally ambivalent journey with a suffering brother or sister will be richly rewarded.

Kushner articulates with remarkable clarity and brevity the standard repertoire of responses to suffering and death offered by religious people. Many simply assume that they are responsible for the disaster they face. They believe that by and large people do get what they deserve. God is after all a righteous judge; it may not always appear that way, but in the end sinners are always repaid! Some merely receive their just deserts early in life. Someone is always personally responsible. "Who

has sinned, Lord, this man or his parents?" This approach offers a neat and attractive solution; unfortunately, it also creates massive and unwarranted guilt and leads many people finally to hate such a demanding God.

Other religious persons assume that suffering is basically educational. God treats us as a wise parent might, withholding certain good things in order to allow us to gain values and a certain freedom for ourselves. Thus, suffering in our lives or in the lives of those close to us teaches us greater human sensitivity, or at least it greatly edifies those who observe our pain and may make them more sensitive. The drawback to this approach—if we are as honest as Kushner—is that it seldom actually works. More people are left embittered and cynical after confronting inexplicable suffering than are being humanely sensitized by it.

A third group takes refuge in the image of a "testing" God. As illustrated in the stories of Abraham and Job (and perhaps even Jesus) God tests his faithful servants. The more faithful seem to be tested the hardest, but God knows that in the end they will all pass the test. God's grace is never in lesser supply than the temptation warrants. Kushner notes that, despite all speculative assertions to the contrary, there is a sadistic quality in this image of God that in actual pastoral practice is hard to dispel.

All three positions hold that God is somehow responsible for the suffering and pain; God must be the proximate and the remote cause. To this commonly held belief, Kushner says no. The random indeterminacy of the universe is the *only* cause of much suffering; the disordered choices of human freedom cause much of the rest. God has no control over either. Rather, God sides consistently with the oppressed and suffering and may even feel their pain as intensely as they do. In the normal course of events God, too, is powerless except to offer comfort—especially in and through his people.

Kushner's presentation is not addressed to the intellectually curious philosopher in us. His conclusions are urged not so much in a theoretical and speculative arena as they are in the immediately personal and emotionally involved sphere. This makes his conclusions even more compelling. But this image of God will be disconcerting and difficult for many to accept. It could be a little easier for Christians, a fact which Rabbi Kushner seems to acknowledge when he remarks that it was Christianity that introduced the notion of a God who suffers. The notion is certainly accepted by Christian theologies; whether it is accepted in realistic enough terms in Christian piety as to be actually helpful psychologically and spiritually is precisely part of the sobering invitation of this book.

This short volume has been widely and almost universally praised by diverse critics ranging from the former president of the American Academy of Psychoanalysts, the late Silvano Arieti, to contem-

porary humorist Art Linkletter, along with a host of psychiatrists, psychologists, and clergy of many denominations in between. It is richly deserving of the praise and readership it has received and should be personally stimulating for all.

—John Allan Loftus, S.J.

Simply Sane: The Spirituality of Mental Health, by Gerald G. May, M.D. New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1982. 130 pp. \$5.95.

Almost ten years ago, psychiatrist Gerald May described a basic human drive for spirituality that could be likened to other drives such as sex and aggression. He suggested that the contemporary taboo against spirituality could be compared with the Victorian taboo against sexuality during Freud's time. Spiritual experience poses at least as deep a threat and rouses at least as much anxiety in contemporary men and women as did sexual experience in earlier times. Hence, many tend to remain firmly entrenched against the type of spiritual sanity that can only find expression by tapping deep religious sensitivities.

May continued to explore his thesis and synthesized many of his conclusions with the publication of *Simply Sane* in 1977. It has now been reprinted in paperback and should be available to a wider audience. It is a book most deserving of a wide and critical readership.

Be forewarned, however; it requires thoughtful reading and many readers will be left frustrated, angry, or worse. Especially vulnerable will be psychologists and psychotherapists, since May contrasts much of the "simple sanity" he describes with the processes and goals of therapy, the fix-it mentality that often naively assumes that people have to work very hard just to become themselves. Those of a psychological persuasion who appreciate a good challenge, a clear and simple style of questioning, and a provocative and seminal framework will certainly enjoy *Simply Sane*. All others should be prepared to have some basic assumptions about sanity, health, and growth questioned.

Throughout, basic Christian values are presented with a radical seriousness. Though they are infrequently explicit, the reader can hear strains of some of Jesus' most paradoxical exhortations about life and the kingdom: anyone who really wants to live must first die; the search for peace, happiness, and wholeness is only found *within*, in a kingdom that can only be discovered, not built by willful machinations. In stark contrast with this religious appreciation of paradox stands the contemporary craziness of "making growth happen" through

self-willed projects. For May, much psychotherapy represents just such craziness.

Only those who are prompted by the great religions of the world, those who can appreciate the natural processes of growth and healing, and those who know that only when they *stop* struggling with life can they truly "find" what it means to live can teach the rest of us genuine sanity. May is quite explicit that "it is a magnificent paradox. One seeks peace and fulfillment by ever-increasing efforts at self-determination, self-improvement, and self-control. But it is only when self-manipulation and self-control are given up that peace and fulfillment are found. They were there all along." May asserts that the "problem is that growth and healing have become building and fixing, and this distortion of reality has led us into a despairing endless struggle for self-improvement." The primary goal of his book is to describe "a sanity which will allow us to be rather than try to be; to live rather than strive to live; to be in the process of healing rather than to be the healer or the healed."

The simple sanity of which May speaks is based on a gentle acceptance of oneself in basic harmony with the universe. He asserts that "total acceptance is a real possibility. It involves accepting beauty and ugliness. And accepting responsibility and laziness, both, completely. It even means accepting one's own inability to accept." Nothing may need to be fixed in us if we can only accept.

Above all, such acceptance requires a gentle attitude. "In all things, above all, be gentle with yourself. Not especially weak, nor especially passive. Just gentle. Nothing should be destroyed, nothing denied, nothing stifled. All goes on as it will, and hopefully one can be wide awake, deeply within it all." Such gentle acceptance is described as the origin of the religious sentiment in prehistoric times as well as the awakening of wonder in every child as he or she grows. Frequently, however, gentle acceptance is also seen as the antithesis of modern systems of healing. Psychotherapy is only helpful, for May, in terms of specific psychological problems and then only when it does not fancy itself as the healing agent but simply presents a clearer vision of reality that constitutes "a bringing of the diseased part into a more natural state." Therapy can purify, cleanse, and give rest, but it does not heal. At best, it allows room for healing. True healing, like true living, will struggle to go on despite our "best efforts."

May stands very close to an iconoclastic tradition of psychiatry represented by R. D. Laing and Thomas Szasz. The most serious criticism of this entire approach concerns not the overall theory—which is actually quite attractive—but the applicability of the theory to real people in actual psychological crises. May is very brief in his considerations of neurosis and psychosis but offers a provocative and challenging perspective *in theory*. He suggests that if neurotics can only treat themselves

with gentleness, accept themselves fully, let themselves be as neurotic as they are, healing might happen. Any other attempt to "fix" neurotic behavior will only result in some other manifestation of dysfunction taking its place anyway. Concerning more psychotic symptoms, May suggests rather cryptically that "if one becomes psychotic, perhaps it is because one has touched the face of God and could not relinquish the importance of self."

May's observations are interesting, stimulating, and perhaps somewhat true, but they could use a much fuller explication and seem to require some actual application before they can be wholeheartedly endorsed as accurate. It would be a delight to see the author present a sequel to *Simply Sane* in which practical case materials would be offered.

Nonetheless, this is a fascinating and challenging book as it stands. It may not be as practically helpful for persons with serious emotional difficulties as one might like, but it does present an enticing invitation to rethink the very notion of sanity itself. Sanity and mental health may be as "simple" and as radically spiritual as many of us used to believe. Then again, they may be more complicated. Enjoy the exploration for yourself.

—John Allan Loftus, S.J.

Compassion: A Reflection on the Christian Life, by Henri Nouwen, Donald McNeill, and Douglas Morrison. New York: Doubleday, 1982. 142 pp. \$12.95.

This book emerges from the authors' "discontent with the individualism and spiritual dryness of our academic lives." At the same time, it reflects intense thought and is concerned with the integration of heady theory and concrete experience.

From God in Jesus Christ through discipleship to prayer and action, the book unfolds the ways of compassion in a very orderly manner. But there is one arresting twist: compassion is presented as harsh and unattractive, not as the spontaneous response of the majority. This is the strength of the book—a fresh approach combined with a disturbing perspective. Throughout, theory is rooted in concrete images full of paradox and urgency. Part I addresses the God of compassion and startles the reader with a description of compassion as "a movement of the womb of God."

Early in the book, the authors state a fundamental theme by juxtaposing compassion with competition. They stress the tension between the two and underline the fact that competition, not compassion, moves most of us to action. Compassion is clearly the gift of God. It is not seen as a "should" but as the free expression of and witness to a living

God. "Service is an expression of the search for the living God and not just of the desire to bring about individual or social change. . . . Radical servanthood challenges us, while attempting persistently to overcome poverty, hunger, illness, and any other form of human misery, to reveal the gentle presence of our compassionate God in the midst of our broken world." The motivation to be compassionate does not arise from personal initiative. It is a response to the call to be one with Jesus in listening and attending to the love of the Father. The authors continue to challenge the reader with such statements as: "Instead of declaring anything and everything to be the will of God, we must be willing to ask ourselves where in the midst of pain and suffering we can discern the loving presence of God."

Part II develops the theme of discipleship. With the same attention to concrete detail, the authors note that "compassion is not an individual character trait . . . but a way of living together." Christian community is described and redefined with the marks of solidarity, servanthood, and obedience as characteristic of a genuine life together. These qualities are presented as interdependent in the full expression of compassion. "The crises in the lives of many caring Christians today are closely connected with deep feelings of not belonging. Without a sense of being sent by a caring community, a compassionate life cannot last long and quickly degenerates into a life marked by numbness and anger."

Togetherness is also discussed as a consequence of voluntary displacement. "Voluntary displacement leads to compassionate living precisely because it moves us from positions of distinction to positions of sameness, from being in special places to being everywhere." It is summed up as an experience "in which we can recognize our sameness in a common vulnerability." Competition disappears in such an environment, leaving us free to attend to one another.

Part III moves a step further toward elucidating the way of compassion, calling for a discipline that will "enable the revelation of God's divine Spirit in us." Underlying this presentation is the repeated assertion that "compassion is not conquered but given, not the outcome of our hard work but the point of God's grace." Here again, a familiar word, "patience," is redefined; time itself is turned inside out, given a new "old meaning" that provokes reconsideration.

The chapter on prayer picks up earlier themes of patience, discipleship, discipline, and displacement while focusing attention on the Spirit living in us and leading us to a divine understanding of the present in all its possibilities. The prayer described is not abstract but rooted in an immediate present. The goal of this prayer is to identify with

our world and the persons in it but to do so with a concrete compassion founded on hope.

The authors state, however, that "prayer without action grows into powerless pietism, and action without prayer degenerates into questionable manipulation." The fine line between action and activism is drawn with a delicacy of perception that is filled with practical wisdom and sensitive to cultural imperatives. In the last analysis, the perspective of faith is emphasized. "In Christ, human suffering and pain have already been accepted and suffered; in him our broken humanity has been reconciled and leads into the intimacy of the relationship between the Father and the Son."

Pencil drawings by Joel Filartiga illustrate the themes of the book and etch them in the mind of the reader. Filartiga is a Paraguayan physician, an outspoken critic of the government, whose son was kidnapped by the police and murdered. His illustrations tell a story of compassion and provide further insight into its challenges and possibilities.

Compassion is a small yet demanding series of reflections.

—George P. Winchester, S.J.

Father Winchester is the assistant director of Campus Ministries at Loyola University, Chicago.

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A Possible New Venture

The Jesuit Educational Center for Human Development is considering the inauguration of a new service. But before we set the plan in motion we want to hear some reactions to the idea from our readers. If we receive enough encouragement, we will go right ahead with the venture we have in mind. If not, we are prepared to act on any substitute recommendations that we might receive.

First, a bit of background. For the past several years our Center has been receiving letters and phone calls that have brought to us requests for information about mental health care that was needed by religious men and women as well as clergy all over the world. An African bishop asked about a place where an alcoholic priest could receive residential treatment. A general superior inquired about a hospital where one of her sisters in South America could go to be treated for the depression she was suffering. A religious brother in the northwestern part of the United States wanted to know how he could find a suitable psychiatrist or psychologist to help one of his confreres who seemed "terribly confused and desperately needing to talk with a professional right away." Dozens of similar requests have come our way.

We have been happy to provide information we hoped would be helpful on these occasions. However, there are hundreds of excellent therapists working in treatment centers and private practice in North America and throughout the world who have proved to be of significant help to religious people needing prompt and competent care, but whose names and locations are unknown to us here. So what we are thinking of doing is to prepare a computerized list of hospitals, clinics, and other facilities, along with professional therapists and counselors, that have in the past demonstrated their ability to help clergy persons and religious women and men who have had problems related to emotions, sexuality, alcohol, and so forth. You could phone us to get the names of those recommended in your locality by people who acknowledge having been helped by them. Do you think this would be a worthwhile venture? Would you be willing to send the names of persons and institutions you would recommend for the list? Please write and tell us what you think about our idea. Thank you.

James J. Gill, S.J., M.D.
Editor-in-Chief

